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THE MONTHLY

COLUMN

BY WOMBSTRETCHA THE MAGNIFICENT

THAT LAID-UP LIFE

The laid-up life. Not the laid-back life or the life of getting laid. Nope, laid-up as in, on your ass.

You see, I had occasion to be hospitalized for a rather lengthy period of time—prior to and after—a major abdominal surgery that corrected some things which, according to physicians, were “all fucked up” and needed some serious work. As life passes in both a dull haze and simultaneous flurry of activity, I have a list of insights from my many weeks in a couple of Oregon’s finer hospitals.

I know everyone likes a good list, so it’s not story time—it’s bullet-point time!

Things I learned in the hospital:

1. They can talk it up all they want, but the food always sucks. Yeah, yeah, “everybody knows that.” But, they try to trick you. They have fancy menus and delicious-sounding descriptions for their edible offerings. But, for all the effort they put into that, the food manages to suck in a way very particular to each hospital. In one I was at, they managed to make everything so dry, that it could barely be eaten. How do you fuck up rice? Well, it can be done, if it’s dry as the Sahara and has overcooked, crunchy parts in it. Way to mess up the simplest of foods! Furthermore, these are supposed to be prepared by dietitians, on staff to cook healthy, satisfying meals!!! When Taco Bell sounds better than food prepared by someone with a doctorate degree, you know you’re in a messed-up situation.

2. Hospitals are a place for rest, not sleep. That may be confusing, if you’ve never been hospitalized. The vision is of someone in a comfy, bed-goes-up situation, in and out of consciousness due to drugs or whatever. But, this is not the case. Outside of very serious circumstances, you are not “drugged to sleep,” as they prefer you reasonably lucid and want you to sleep on your own. This is hard, given that every few hours, someone will barge in on you and check vital signs, get blood or ask you

questions, regardless of the time of day.

3. If sleep is precious, boredom is eternal. It’s 90% downtime, for the most part. And, if there’s serious action (like surgery), you’re knocked out for it, if it’s any kind of significant. Books, laptops, sex industry magazines and other distractions only go so far, when you don’t really have the option of getting up and moving around—you will be bored.

4. Your best friend can literally be a hole in your neck, with medical dreadlocks coming out of it. It is called a “central line” and, while a hole in your neck with a hose running down your jugular doesn’t sound pleasant, you really don’t notice it (plus, it beats hourly needle-stickings).

5. People can, will and regularly do rip out their catheters. Here is a snippet of a conversation heard outside my room, between an old man and nursing staff:

“Sir, you need to get back to your bed.”

(murmur murmur)

“Sir! Your gown is unbuttoned! You need to be resting!”

(murmur murmur)

“Sir! Don’t pull on your catheter! Please, don’t pull your catheter out!”

(murmur murmur) “YEEEEOWCH!”

“Sir, let’s get you back to your room.”

Learn from this old man—do not remove your own catheter. It hurts enough when THEY remove stuff embedded in your peehole. Don’t “freestyle” it.

6. In the matter of organ transplants, there’s a misconception that the organs are “on ice” and waiting to be put into recipients. This is not so. Most of the time, the goodies are kept in the still-living-but-brain-dead body of the donor. The donor’s body is kept medically alive until they round up everyone who’s claimed a piece of them. Then, they “pull the plug” on life support, to let the donor “die naturally.” So, to recap, they’re already dead, but everyone has to wait for the body to die. Furthermore, if this process takes too long, you can lose viable organs waiting for them to up and die. Plus, they can’t just strangle them, to speed it up—I asked, and they looked at me like a savage. They’re already dead! Perma-death their ass and get on with it!!! TV and movies seldom touch on this, perhaps because a kidney or a heart in a bag of ice is less unpleasant to think about, than literally using a living corpse as a steam tray to keep fresh organs warm.

7. Sometimes, when you have to take a dump, you are not master of your own fate. Accept the fact that someone else may be steward of your bowel movements.

8. Since constant re-runs on TV are the norm for hospitals, *Star Trek* watchers might find the parallels between living in a hospital and living on a *Trek* ship become readily apparent very quickly. How so? Well, here’s a sub-list:

* All the staff wear different colored uniforms depending on their jobs and are always walking with purpose while speaking jargon.

* The food tastes like it was replicated or some shit.

* Day and night lose meaning rather quickly.

* Things are always beeping, alarming, broadcasting messages to certain staff, who can moments later be spotted rushing down a hallway. There’s always a background of techno noise.

* Services are 24/7—food, medical care, repairs, etc.

* There are often fights, camaraderie and gambling between strange alien beings in the public areas, like the ER waiting room.

* Glowing screens everywhere.

* Living quarters are compact, but efficient and fairly comfortable.

* There is often a jovial, bald man (or a stern-faced, middle-aged woman), giving orders to everyone.

* I am pretty sure some Klingons attacked once.

9. Nursing staff either know what they’re doing or are pleasant to look at. Never both, but seldom neither.

So, it goes without saying, avoid hospitalization if you can.

Cheers,

-WSTM

Wombstretcha The Magnificent is a writer, horse counter-terrorism expert, Maya Angelou impersonator, Etsy pimp chalice maker, “yo mama” joke critic and retired rapper from Portland, OR. Wombstretcha can be found at Wombstretcha.com, on Twitter as @Wombstretcha503, and on Facebook as Wombstretcha The Magnificent.

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JONAS DOES PORTLAND
BY JONAS BARNES

SINGLE ON VALENTINE'S DAY IN THE REAL CITY OF SIN

Here's a little backstory about me, loyal readers: my roots are based in Portland. I was born on your streets. My mother survived on your dance stages—we lived in your doorways. I am, perhaps, more "Portland" than most of you could truly claim. Since then, I've lived all over the country and have now landed in NYC, to chase my comedy dreams. I moved to NYC with my then-girlfriend, whom I met in Portland. In fact, Valentine's Day was actually our anniversary. Our relationship began one fateful Valentine's night, at Casa Diablo, full of whiskey and vegan food—a night that eventually took us to NYC. This isn't a sad sack, somber piece. People change and that crazy, talented woman will always have a piece of my heart. But, now that we've ended our "Bonnie And Clyde Of Comedy" relationship, I'm faced with a dilemma: being single on Valentine's Day. In NYC, I've got it easy, because I can do ANYTHING here. This city is an endless vortex of activity. Most of you are in Portland, though, so I'm here to take you on a singles journey, through one of my favorite cities on the planet, during the biggest consumer-driven, bullshit holiday there is.

Let's get the most obvious one option of the way: strip clubs. Go to the strip clubs, guys! Don't be a fucking baby about it. Go and spend your money on ladies that are literally giving up their Valentine's Day for YOU to have a good time! A couple rules to remember, though, since desperation may be thick. First and foremost, keep your hands to yourself. You're not taking them home. They don't owe you shit. You're going to get attention and they're providing a service. So, keep your hands to yourself. Also, enjoy yourself and don't be a cock about it—no sadness, just happy times and private dances. Got it? Good. My personal recommendations are

Casa Diablo, Kit Kat Club, Lucky Devil, Devil's Point and Mary's Club (if you want some nostalgia in your life). Enjoy the sins of the flesh!

My next recommendation is going to see a live show. When I say live show, I mean anything that PDX has to offer. Dante's is a den of sin—every night of the week—so, step into the hallowed halls of hell and see a show. Fire-breathing burlesque dancers and metal music not your thing? Well, shame on you. You can also check out Helium Comedy Club to laugh away the loneliness. If you like your Valentine's Day a little sleazier, I'd recommend taking your sin-soaked ass to Aladdin Theater for "A Date With John Waters." Go see a drag show in Salem, maybe? Shock yourself outta that comfort zone. Point being: live entertainment is a Portland staple, so take advantage of it.

The final recommendation I have for you is very simple: get laid. Yes, you heard me correctly. Go out to a bar, meet other singles, hit it off with someone, go back to one of your places and fuck each other into a new dimension. You think you're the only single person on Valentine's Day? Get all the way the fuck outta here, you self-important asshole! There are SO MANY single people floating around the city. Jump in the pool and get your parts wet. It's one of the best parts of being single—you can fuck a lot, and lots of other people are looking for exactly that, too. Orgasms bring people together better than most other things. Everyone loves to cum, as it turns out. Who would have guessed? But, wait... maybe you hate bars. Maybe you're sober. Maybe the sheer thought of going into a sea of drunken desperation causes your gluten intolerance to act up. I get it—the bar scene isn't for everyone. You're in luck, though, be-

cause you're in Portland. You ready to step out of the box and nosedive outside of your bitch-ass comfort zone? Are you? I mean, are you REALLY ready? Good. Fuck the bar scene. Go to a swingers club. Yes, you heard me correctly. Swingers clubs get a bad rap for being, gross, for lack of a better term. Well, I can tell you from experience that...some of them are. Luckily, you have me to guide you. My personal recommendation is the former home of "Club Sesso," now known as "Club Privata." The place has rave reviews and is definitely one of the more upscale ones in the city. Remember the basics, though: no means no, always ask first and have some goddamn tact. It's a flesh buffet, but you still need to be a good person about it. I promise, it will pay off to not be a scumbag.

There you have it, single friends. You're lucky to live in such a wonderfully free city of sinful delights. Underneath the surface of artisan oxygen bars and hipster beards lies a wonderful, delicious layer of sexual freedom. You're not alone on this day and once you step outside of your box, you'll see the light. And, above all, remember that Valentine's Day really is a bullshit holiday, created to sell chocolate and horseshit Hallmark cards with sappy, flaccid motivational quips, written by some queef in a cardigan. This year, it's just a Wednesday, like any other week. So, all that shit I mentioned above... go ahead and do all of it, starting tomorrow, so you don't wallow in your sadness. Go live life and fall back in love with Portland—and, more importantly—yourself.

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Why THE BARTENDER HATES YOU!

By Miss Tini



Despite what many may think, bartending is not a party—it isn't glamorous and it most definitely isn't always easy. It's a job, like any other. We have to clock in and out on time, answer to a boss, deliver customer service and behave in a professional manner. In addition, we have to closely monitor people's behavior, ensure we keep bar costs down, count our cash accurately, host a party, attempt to build customer loyalty and maintain a safe environment...all while SOBER.

Sometimes we have to break up fights, deal with violent or combative intoxicated people, clean up vomit, or worse, keep an eye out for the predators and all-around shitbags that come in many forms. It's a great job, but also a daunting one at times. People often say that Portland bartenders are "rude." I asked about a little over 100 Portland bartenders what they hate the most about working in a bar. This is just a short list of things that make us need to take a Xanax at about 10PM, just to cope. No, it has nothing to do with tips. Tips are appreciated, but not expected. Of course, if you're not tipping at all, you're an asshole—period...and, you know it. If your bartender is rude to you, chances are you may be doing any or all of the following, as in, someone who:

1. Cuts the line, frantically waves you down or even shouts for you to serve them, even though they clearly weren't next—then, doesn't know what they want.

2. Orders, but then takes forever getting their money out or their card, even though tons of people are waiting, even though it's a slammed Friday night, as if they weren't aware that we are in a money exchanged for goods situation.

3. Orders, then runs off to the bathroom without paying or leaving a tab name, while tons of people are waiting to order and now you have to look for them constantly, to come back to actually pay for the drink you just poured.

4. Orders, but then is super annoyed that you don't remember their tab name, even though there are literally a hundred tabs open. Listen, Chad, it turns out people don't really like it when you gamble with their tabs, i.e. *their bank accounts*. So, I'm going to go ahead and make sure I put the correct drinks on the correct tab, so people don't get ripped off. Is that cool?

5. Is a beer snob. Asks to taste multiple beers...slowly...and wants to talk about the A.B.V. and origin of each one, even though the bar is at least five deep and is very far from being any sort of "beer bar." It's a *beer* dude, not a life decision.

6. Insists on ordering unnecessarily complicated drinks, even though the wait time to get one is near 20 minutes at this point, because it's Friday and the bar is busy. "I'll have a well vodka and soda with two muddled limes, three muddled lemons, shaken,

with a sugared rim." I wonder why the wait to get a drink is taking so long? Weird.

7. Orders soda water after soda water, because they don't want to drink from the water station and then are surprised that it costs anything. Special shout out to people who get a soda water with bitters and a lime. The average bottle of bitters costs \$11 a bottle and a bag of limes costs about \$20, depending upon the season. The canister of soda costs about \$25-\$30, depending upon the distributor. Yeah, they cost money. You are not entitled to consume products for free, just because they don't have alcohol in them.

8. Says, "I just want a..." and then proceed with the most high-maintenance order known to man.

9. People who are seriously pissed that you don't have "a big rock." Guess what? The whiskey is the same, regardless of the size of ice cube.

10. Is genuinely pissed off that you won't interrupt the house music to play a song request. Do you know how disruptive that is to everyone else? Also, if I play a song for you, I have to stop and play a song for everyone who asks. The last time I checked, I'm not getting paid to DJ. I'm paid to pour drinks.

11. Tries to shout an order at you, while you're still clearly helping another cus

tomers.

12. Stands at a place that obviously isn't for ordering, or somehow tries to come behind the bar to interrupt you to place a drink order.

13. Shouts orders at your back, while you're turned around entering things into the POS. Especially infuriating, because sometimes you have two-to-four orders in your head that you're struggling to accurately enter into the system.

14. Order the order that doesn't end! You make some drinks, set them down, then they keep calling friends over systematically, so that the order takes three times as long as it should or could.

15. Orders "a vodka soda," watches you make it, then says, "Oh, I wanted Ketel One" or "I wanted that tall," forcing you to dump it or remake it, when they knew exactly what they wanted in the first place.

16. Whispers their order, like it's a damned secret, even though it's as loud as a Metallica concert in the bar, forcing you to say, "WHAT?" over and over, or even leading you to contort your body over the bar and cupping your hand over your ear, in an effort to hear their baby voice. **SPEAK UP!**

17. Makes out or talks amongst their group, ignoring you...but, you can't walk away and serve someone else, because you've already started part of their order and it's way too busy to walk away and come back and keep track.

18. Sticks their fingers in the fruit tray and help themselves, forcing you to dump it, because...gross. Do you want an olive in your drink, that has had a bunch of people's fingers brushed over it? No? Weird.

19. Chooses "close out" more than four times...maybe up to 20 in a night.

20. Claims to be a "tequila expert." Look, Millennials: just because you went to Cabo that one time does *not* make you a connoisseur. No, I don't have the particular Mezcal you think you want. Just pick from the 8 tequilas I DO have and shut up. Literally, *no one* is impressed.

21. Outright asks for free drinks "for the birthday girl." You've never seen them in your bar before in your life. They aren't regulars. They marched right up to the bar and straight up asked for free drinks.

22. Says they'll tip you if you "smile." I'm not



a trained dog. Keep your dollar, asshole.

23. Makes a big fucking deal about you needing to see their I.D., even though you're a good ten years older than them, and also, fuck you—it's the law.

24. Complains and asks you to change the house music. Like, you think you're *so damned* special that your opinion outweighs everyone else's in the bar? If that's the case, you should go out and be a DJ. Good luck.

25. Leaves snotty napkins, trash, chewed gum, etc. on the bar for the bartender to clean, even though there are ample trash cans available. Basically, sending a message that the bartender is lower than you and deserves to pick up your bodily waste.

26. Flags you down and shouts at you to come and get a tip from them rather than just leaving it on the bar or in the jar. This is degrading.

27. Asks for hugs. In what other job is this acceptable?

28. Questions the I.D. process. When I ask you if you are over 21, per the law, and you proceed to scoff and make a huge deal about how you are *Way, WAY* over 21, I really don't care. It's a yes or no question that I'm required to ask. If I don't, I could lose my license and not be allowed to bartend anymore, which is my livelihood. Someday no one will card you anymore. Enjoy it while it lasts. **JUST ANSWER** the question.

29. Hits on you, then gets **VERY** upset when you politely decline, because they really believed that your polite customer service was flirtation or, even worse, that because they gave you a generous tip, you owe them something.

30. Mutters their name, when you ask them about their tab. Look, *you've* been saying your name your entire life. I've just heard it for the first time. Also, chances are it sounds like a lot of other names in the P.O.S. **ANNUNCIATE! SLOWLY!**

31. Falls under the "hamster" category—people who shred up their coasters or napkins and leave the little paper shreds everywhere, for you to clean.

Want to be a good bar patron? Be a favorite? Favorites and good customers get served first, get freebies and all-around, better service. If you make my job easier, I'll make your drinking time worthwhile. Wait your turn (trust me, we see you), tip and behave. Its literally that easy.

Love & WEED

GREEN ROOM DIARIES
BY STONED COLD SATIVA AWESOME

I finally did it. I got the number of the cute chick that works at the dispensary and we've been dating for at least a few weeks (unless I really, really fucked up before this magazine hit the press). What's odd, though, is that both of us are what most would consider "normal," in terms of where we land on the stoner scale—neither of us have dreadlocks, wear tie dye or listen to reggae (at least, no more than most Oregonians). For me, this is a first on many levels; with the exception of casual flings and disposable connections, I've never really dated someone that can hold their own, when it comes to weed. Both of us have jobs, interests that require motivation and even social circles that consist of folks who don't smoke weed. How do I see this playing out? Well, here are a few areas, where I see the positive in dating someone who consumes as much OG Kush as I do...

Who Cares About Weed Breath?

I used to smoke cigarettes. That shit was disgusting. I can't kiss a tobacco smoker anymore, unless I'm drunk (and, as we all know, that's the same as rape). But, I don't get the "your breath tastes like weed" complaints that I've received from past lovers who don't blaze. What does weed breath taste like? Tea? Skunk? To me, it tastes like cotton and the flavor of whatever soda I'm enjoying. Smelling like weed, sure, I can see where that's problematic. But, checking oneself for weed breath is something that I've never figured out how to do. Thus, I have no prob-

lem swapping oral fluids with another weed smoker, nor does it lead to requests that I go gargle some mouthwash. We can share dabs, joints, edibles and even day-old Applebee's, all without the need to apologize for our stoner breath.

Sleeping With Each Other Is Often Literal

In recent years, my sex drive has increased like the price of Bitcoin—with fewer crashes and minimal restriction from foreign markets. But, what has not increased, is my ability to operate on minimal sleep. I've slept through job interviews, anniversaries, two earthquakes and god only knows what else. I put sleep somewhere between freedom of speech and the right to fresh air. In fact, if given the choice between an all-night sex session that costs me a night of sleep and ten hours of uninterrupted napping, I'm gonna opt to crash and hope for wet dreams. So, it's extremely awesome to be dating someone else who feels that staying home and saying "to hell with plans" is not only an option, but a virtue. Sleep is a delicacy, like a strong Indica with lasting effects. Sharing a "fuck it" day with someone whose ass you don't mind palming is heaven.

You Won't Move Too Fast

The major differences between the average drunk fling and a weed date are about two visits to Planned Parenthood, a morning of regrets and at least one verbal altercation with your one-night stand's boyfriend, outside the tap house the next night. I speak from experience. Now, with weed-friendly courtship, you're both hel-



la paranoid that the other one might not feel the same way. This leads to watching at least two seasons of *Black Mirror*, while moving back and forth between first base and the dugout. I'm not saying that ston-

ers can't be as freaky, slutty or kinky as the rest of us, but marijuana doesn't exactly turn someone into a whore-nado of regrettable sex. Plus, when you finally do get down to it, weed makes sex last longer (for men, particularly, it takes longer to orgasm when baked).

Dates Can Be Boring, Inexpensive And Awesome

When not at least mildly intoxicated with a nice Sativa-dominant hybrid, I find it hard to interact with the female gender. This leads to first dates full of expensive distractions like expensive dinners, theme parks or nightclubs. Aside from Sinferno or Hive, I really don't hit a lot of clubs and I don't like shelling out money for movie tickets. However, when I'm dating another stoner, we can sit around for hours playing Playstation, then take a small hike or even a drive to the beach, which ends up being just as fun as any "typical" date activity. And, when we do decide to go out into public and pretend to not be high, it's all giggles and smirks. Anything that normies consider "boring" is made better with weed (this is a fact). Further, I don't ever plan on having kids, but you can bet your ass that if the condom breaks and the clinic is closed, my little minions and their dance recitals will be enjoyed while blunted to the max.

If It Gets Boring, Just Switch Strains

What happens when the same old, same old gets to be too routine? Well, just change it up from Girl Scout Cookies to OG Kush. Relationship getting boring? Switch from Indica to Sativa. Does your man talk too much? Give him some Chem Dawg and watch him shut up. Is your girl getting anxious about going out? Fill her lungs up with some Blueberry Diesel. For every problem in life, there's a strain of weed. Compare this to a typical, alcohol-driven relationship, in which case it's just a long cycle of fight, fuck, rinse, repeat... marijuana is clearly the better choice.

So, there you have it, a few ways that pot can make your relationship extremely enjoyable, and if things go sour, completely forgettable.

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BY RAY MCMILLIN

Are we kidding? It's only one month into the new year and already, we've got the same old shit in the headlines. The Republicans did something dumb. The Democrats did something creepy. Rinse, repeat. Then, we've got the new shit, that simply tries to one-up the old shit, in terms of being even dumber shit. This month? Teenagers are vaping Tide Pods. Yes, they've moved on from eating the damn things and are now smoking the liquid using e-cig devices. *Idiocracy* is slowly becoming a documentary and Darwin deserves a posthumous award or two. But, alas, this is "local news and events," not "Ray's list of shit that he'll use as a defense, when he finally snaps and takes out a liberal arts college."

Strip Club News From Around P-Town

In an extremely unfortunate turn of events, Club PlayPen's doors are temporarily closed, due to a fire that occurred last month, damaging the interior beyond the point of immediate repair. Personally, I think Club PlayPen is one of the best spots on the north end of town and, once they re-open after a remodel, I fully plan on rolling out there to grab a few drinks and dances. Strip clubs and taco shops are the *only* establishments that I shed a tear for, when they close down (even temporarily).

Speaking of which, on a much more positive note, the location of what was once the Boom Boom Room is now housing a new, upscale club called Reveal. Thank god someone kept the building a strip club, because it's a fucking perfect location—right off of I-5, off-street parking and within walking distance of public transit. Portland adult entertainment mainstay, DJ Dick Hennessy, will be hosting a Mardi Gras Party at Reveal Lounge on Saturday, February 20th. I'll be sure to swing by, so bring me some of those sweet Dutch pre-rolls, Dick! Gorilla style!

Venereal Day Is Here

As far as the rest of the town, well, what can we say? It's February, which means the first two weeks of the month are

dedicated to social anxiety and questions about where the relationship is going, followed by two more weeks of being broke, or worse, having the bubble guts thanks to upscale diners never cleaning their kitchens. Valentine's Day isn't something I shake my fist at, but it's no big deal, when it comes to my dating life. If I'm only nice to you for a few weeks during the shortest month of the year, then I'm probably not making dinner reservations for anywhere besides McDonald's.

Now, for the singles out there...man, do we have some great advice in this issue. Helen's column, *Slutscapades*, takes on V-Day cards (read Helen's tips on making your own—I'm thinking of a *Silence Of The Lambs* theme, but I can't find a unique rhyme for "lotion"), while *Jonas Does Portland* drops some knowledge on how to be single in the Rose City on the world's most overrated holiday. Myself? Well, I suggest only one course of action for anyone this year, whether or not you're single, taken or "jus' fuckin' like most of Portland—patronize an adult shop. That's right...I'm not only pandering to our advertisers here, but I'm being completely honest about how to make a memory. See, no one will look back on years of amazing, romantic sex and think, "Hey, remember that time you took me to that nice restaurant that overlooks downtown?" Unless, of course, that dinner was followed by a trip to Taboo or Fantasyland. Adult stores are to Valentine's Day what candy stores are to Halloween—sure, there's always a reason to patronize them, but the perfect time to do so is on a day when everyone is celebrating.

Israel's Tip Rail Makes Headlines

Aside from that story about Trump and some over-the-hill pornstar (seriously, I'm not fucking covering it...see my column on *Presidents And Porn* for the real dirt), there really isn't a lot of news regarding strippers, adult stars or *Exotic*-worthy material floating around the media outlets, until you go halfway across the world to Israel. Sure, Israel is in the news every day, but mostly because of holy wars,

politics and all that dumb shit. This time, however, we've got ourselves a fresh-ass scandal, complete with strippers and politicians' kids. According to *Chicago Tribune*, "Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced a new scandal Tuesday after a recording emerged of his 26-year-old, stay-at-home son joyriding at taxpayer expense to Tel Aviv strip clubs with his super-rich buddies and bragging about how his father pushed through a controversial gas deal."

Whoa. Now, that is some next level shit, when it comes to co-opting Western traditions and embracing globalism. I remember when images of backdoor, Middle Eastern scandals involved images of briefcases and assault rifles. Netanyahu's kid, well, he has shit figured out. Take money from the taxpayers, court your clients by taking them to the strip club and then brag about it, because why the fuck not? I can't tell if this kid is looking up to Bill Clinton, Donald Trump or a combination of both, but it's nice to see that U.S. and Israel are finally coming to an agreement on the good ol' fashioned ways in which grown adults conduct business—by letting the bosses' son take everyone out for lap dances.

Strippers On The Big Screen

It's odd, living in a major metropolitan city with more strip clubs than cops, mainly because the widely held beliefs regarding strip club culture—especially in the media—are often a few decades old. Hell, even our own *Oregonian* recently ran a story about Portland's "seedy underbelly" of "strip clubs and prostitutes," with their newest gritty scandal being... wait for it...Jiggles losing their liquor license. Yeah, that happened in 1984. The place is a goddamned Cracker Barrel now, half of the dancers who worked there are hitting menopause and there are these crazy pocket computers that all the kids are using to send messages to each other. Let's ignore the 1,134 other strip clubs in downtown Portland alone and two decades' worth of history, because why not?

So, it's dope to be privy to not one, but two, locally sourced, far-from-"indie" films that represent the Portland strip club industry, while simultaneously humanizing the dancers who keep our clubs well-oiled (literally and figuratively).

The first of these films is *Vicious*, a 2016 release that is not to be confused with a short film of the same title, released a year earlier (both possess a "woman in trouble" plot synopsis, so make sure you check out the version showcased at ViciousTheMovie.com). The recipient of multiple awards, *Vicious* is an extremely underrated piece of cinema for more reasons than the obvious. For regular, boring, non-strip-clubby audiences, it's

drama in the clubs, but never as it's portrayed on the big screen.

Vicious tells a story that rings true to all too many dancers—that being, the tale of customer-turned-stalker. Strippers live a paradox, in which they become experts in being a fantasy girl for the men (and women) who pay their bills (and, thus, their livelihood), but in this process, they must also retain strict anonymity. I've always explained it as follows: a stripper can show a stranger her private parts, but she becomes a target when she lets him know her real name. Strippers are on the same level as, say, undercover cops or government informants (but, far superior in terms of ethics and contribution to society as a whole), when it comes

as well as non-patronizing. Big ups to writer and director Jason Rosenblatt, for putting out such a well-produced and entertaining representation of the strip club life.

Next up, we've got *Dancer Diaries*. This film, well, I'm partial to it, because I have a small role. Same with local favorites including Elle Stanger, as well as many, many more familiar faces. Director and writer, Andy Norris, published a book by the same name, but there's really only so much justice one can do for naked women, using text alone (trust me, I battle with this on a monthly basis). So, his movie sits, about 80% finished, awaiting funding. DancerDiaries.com is the place where you can become a producer of this destined-for-cult-status film, but let me save you the sales pitch—this movie is already the shit. Go check out clips from the website if you don't believe me, but in short, it's a spiderweb of stories that all involve Portland-area strippers (or, at least characters who strip and end up in Portland, somehow).

Humanizing dancers is something that, regardless of the sheer volume of adult entertainment available online, we don't see enough of. *Dancer Diaries* features pole tricks and fist fights galore, but the focus of the plot is really on the women involved and their various backstories. Audiences will follow one girl as she hitchhikes up the 101 from Humboldt County, while another dancer's story involves a more *Vicious*-themed set of gritty crime and tense-ass drama. I've also had the honor of meeting the director and writer, Andy Norris, and believe you me, when I tell you that this dude is fucking meticulous. I loathe the terms "indie" and "local," so I won't use them to describe *Dancer Diaries* (plus, Andy's still waiting on funding and I'm not sure he filmed most of it in Portland, so it is neither independent nor homegrown, if you want to get technical). I've seen stuff on Netflix that looks like it was produced on a flip phone, so it's painful to see something as polished and professional as *Dancer Diaries* collect dust in post-production. If you've got a few extra Bitcoin



a well-crafted thriller drama which is unlikely to generate any serious criticism. But, for those of us familiar with the strip club industry, *Vicious* is refreshing, in that it was clearly made by people who have not only been to a strip club once or twice, but have actually gotten to know a few dancers, bouncers, club owners and customers. Films that show a respect for the strip club industry are different than, say, shit fests like *Showgirls* or *Striptease*, that feature soulless dancers, generic backdrops and plot lines that *always* involve some shady, ethnically ambiguous dudes involved in drug deals or money laundering. In reality, there is crime and

to on-the-job safety. While this is clearly acknowledged in *Vicious*, the film takes it one step further by portraying club owners, bouncers, customers and dancers as one would meet them in real life. Sure, stereotypes are shit and there are dozens of archetypes out there, when it comes to clumping us "strip club people" into a box. Still, an oiled-up Burt Reynolds or fake titty Demi Moore never did us justice.

It's hard to review *Vicious* without giving away spoilers, but it's worth noting that, even after a decade or two in this industry, I found *Vicious* both hard to predict,



laying around, toss some at this project and I guarantee you'll be doing a service to the community.

New Year, New Writers!

Exotic would like to welcome to our team two new pen names, which are attached to real faces (trust me). Miss Tini, a resident P-Town bartender, just popped her Exotic cherry this month, with an excellent and scathing rant on the customers that keep bartenders on edge. Remember, strip clubs *are* bars—just, ya know, bars with poles and naked people. Learn from Tini and take her column to heart, before hitting the town with your amateur friends for Mardi Gras. Next up, we have Blazer Sparrow, who is presenting his second column this month. Blazer's a music guy, and a *cis white male*, so I put him second. Plus, he's a musician, so I'd put him third if I had the chance. Still, rumor has it that Chuck Palahniuk is a fan of his writing, so don't skip his piece. And, of course, the rest of our "unusual gang of sub-geniuses" has cram packed this month's issue with a double dose of editorial. Like what you see? Want to send hate mail? Hit us up on Facebook (Facebook.com/XoticMag) and give us a poke, like, share or subscribe.



eroticcity spotlight

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**THU 22 – STARS CABARET (BRIDGEPORT)
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& EVAN STONE**

FRI 23 – SKINN – SQUIRT GUN CONTEST

**FRI 23 – STARS CABARET (SALEM)
ADULT FILM STAR KATIE MORGAN
& EVAN STONE**

**FRI 23 – TOMMY'S TOO
DAISY DUKE CONTEST**

**SAT 24 – REVEAL LOUNGE
SOCIAL SOIRÉE**

**SAT 24 – STARS CABARET (BEND)
ADULT FILM STAR KATIE MORGAN
& EVAN STONE**



5 EASY THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BE A BETTER AUDIENCE MEMBER

BY BLAZER SPARROW

While no one factor is particularly to blame for the insufferable nature of the live music scene in Portland, you, the audience—yes, you—could make these passive-aggressive, beanie-and-scarf fashion shows much more enjoyable for everyone involved (including the venue owner, band, bartender and the poor bastards in the audience) with these five easy steps.

PAY THE COVER

For Christ's sake, it's three fucking dollars. You could scrounge that change up from your couch and, in doing so, find the remote and some unopened Taco Bell sauces—incentive bonus! It doesn't matter if you know someone in the band or are a "photographer." The less people pay, the grumpier the venue becomes and the less likely they are to book your friend's band again. More importantly, your buddy's band makes less money than they would have if folks paid the cover charge. Maybe, if these first couple of local shows go well, you can bug your friend about getting in through the back stage at Doug Fir or Crystal Ballroom. But, at the bottom level, nobody has any favors to give out. You're gonna spend \$20 on booze and, if you can get a hold of your guy, another \$80 on blow. Seriously, why is your heart breaking over three sweaty pocket dollars? It's cool that some places in Portland (like the Firkin) don't even bother charging a cover. But, for the smaller venues that do, it really shouldn't be a deterrent—especially if it's anything under \$5. The more people pay to go to these shows, the more likely venue owners are going to put them on and then we can all have more awesome live music shows in Portland (assuming the bands are good).

BUY MERCH (IF THE BAND HAS ANY)

Now, I know I just broke your wallet by asking you to shell out three whole dollars to get into Twilight and your drinking budget has been drastically reduced. However,

I need to ask you one more small favor. Buy a T-shirt or a CD...or, even a sticker. Unless the band really sucks (in which case, why are you at the show?)—it really does make a difference to buy something directly from the band (even if it's a dumb \$1 sticker). The main reason is all those three-dollar covers at the door are more than likely going straight into the venue owner's pocket. Best case scenario, they use the door take to pay the door guy himself (ironic) or the sound person. I guarantee almost none of that money goes to the band. One way to subvert this capitalist tomfoolery, is to give money directly to the band. Plus, putting that sticker on your bumper, your binder or even a telephone pole, does make a difference. Wearing their T-shirts in public makes a huge difference. It really does help get the band's name out there. It helps even more if you happen to be attractive or popular (ideally, both).

MOVE!

By far, the most obnoxious thing about Portland's live music scene (especially in the rock genre) is the audience's utter refusal to move a muscle. People say Seattle is even worse, but I've attended and performed shows in Seattle, and it isn't nearly as bad as the standing-still contest at every rock show I've been to in Portland. Granted, it is up to the band to be into the music they're performing, which the audience then feeds off of, which the band then, in turn, feeds back off of and so on. Still, the audience could take initiative. Whether it's dancing, moshing, headbanging or simply shuffling from side to side, just do something. Anything. Unless the band sucks, in which case, leave or go find your blow guy. But, if you're enjoying it, show it. It makes a world of difference. If you can get that positive feedback loop going, then everyone has a good time. People talk about how awesome that show was, the venue notices, the band notices, etc. Everyone wins.

DON'T BE A CREEPER

This, of course, ties into a much larger problem that expands beyond Portland and the music scene in general. But, it still applies in our quest to make Portland shows not suck! Also, yes, number four is pretty much exclusively aimed at guys. Luckily, with most venues, if you get too creepy or too handsy, you're gonna get kicked out (as you should be, asshole). But, still, stop! Yes, seeing bands is a great way to meet people if you're single. You already have something to talk about—you know, the band you both like (or, were at least dragged to at the behest of friends.) Still, there's a million wrong ways to go about talking to people at shows. And, the more you do it, the less fun everyone is having at the show. It discourages people from seeing the band again or attending the venue again, because they become associated with jerks like you, so don't be that jerk. We're all here to enjoy the music and you're making it difficult with your "accidental" grazes. Also, don't stand in the corner with your eyes glued to the three girls on the dance floor and not the band. We all know what you're doing and you're ruining it for everyone else.

STAY FOR THE WHOLE SHOW

I get it if you just came from work or have a café or hospital shift at 4AM the next morning, but unless you have a good reason to not see all three or four (hopefully not five) bands, just stick around. Maybe you'll find a new favorite local band. Maybe you'll make some new friends. Either way, you'll never find out, if you show up exactly when your friends' band plays and leave as soon as their set is over. There is nothing more aggravating than getting that text from friends asking when "my band" starts. I don't know, but I can tell you when the "show" starts and that's when you should arrive. Also, stick around 'til the end. Unless you're double booking tonight, you might as well get another drink, rather than close your tab out and seek out a disappointing night elsewhere. The point of having more than one band on the bill isn't just to get more people to come out, but to also cross-pollinate fan bases. And, yes, by fan base, I mean the five people obligated to come, because their friend's in the band. Still, it's a start, and if you're going to build something out of nothing, you have to start somewhere.

You'd be surprised how much the Portland music scene would improve, if you just did these five little things. Be the change you wish to see in the scene! Unless you enjoy being part of the Who-Can-Look-Like-They-Care-The-Least Contest.

CYBORG SEX & GENDER WARFARE: THE TRUTH BEHIND SEX DOLLS

BY MATT ROSE

When people get a hold of new technology, they tend to create social spaces within otherwise practical and utilitarian environments—new waves of technology are always accompanied by an element that fits a particular need for human interaction. When given the opportunity to escape into virtual worlds, consumers express insatiable desire for interaction with real people. AOL is famous for chat rooms and instant messaging. Before that, BBS systems were used to connect basement-dwellers with ASCII porn and creepy old men who presented as horny teenage girls. Games such as *Second Life* bridge real and virtual social realms, while shoot-em-up and combat games continue to focus on interactive elements (there have been real-life marriages and funerals held in the *Warcraft* universe). Put simply, social interaction is never replaced by virtual reality but, rather, it adapts to it.

A great example of how platforms designed for digital entertainment turn social is Twitch, an online streaming platform that is, in theory, designed for gamers to broadcast their conquests, live for other viewers to enjoy. In reality, it's basically YouTube, with far less restriction. Twitch is home to thousands of cleavage streamers (hot girls in skimpy outfits, pretending to play *Zelda* in the world's smallest in-game camera... you can get the same result if you just open Minesweeper and Chatterbate at the same time), as well as various other channels that host stand-up comedy, political talk shows and anything else you'd find on YouTube. Video games are almost an afterthought on many Twitch channels, and it is also the platform in which I was first introduced to the concept of sex dolls.

I stumbled onto a streamer named Turd Flinging Monkey, who hosts a Twitch show that focuses on a philosophy called MGTOW, which stands for "Men Going Their Own Way." If Men's Rights Activists (MRAs) are analogous to radical feminists, MGTOW are the male equivalent of single, working women who are opting out of childhood and choosing to focus on their careers. While feminism and men's rights are active philosophies, MGTOW is more passive and self-focused. Still, regardless of what the MGTOW community has to say for themselves, like

any other unorthodox, self-sustained counterculture, they are shamed and demonized by pretty much all of the internet (including Men's Rights Activists). According to insert-news-outlet-here, MGTOW is usually described as a bunch of women-hating misogynist trash.

So, it might come as a surprise to learn MGTOW and Twitch streamer Turd Flinging Monkey's take on sex dolls—put simply, his channel portrays sex dolls as a safe alternative to real-life women, as the dolls provide, and I quote, "companionship" and commitment, without any risk of being "alimony raped" or otherwise taken advantage of by unfair laws that disadvantage men. The Doll House (The-Doll-House.com), a sponsor for the Twitch channel being discussed here, advertises a variety of sex dolls that range in size and shape. While most dolls are younger in appearance, none of them appear to be underage, ridiculously out-of-proportion or otherwise first-gen Lara Croft, in terms of being impossible to replicate in human form. Yes, the dolls feature a variety of body shapes and breast sizes, but the business presents itself in an arguably classy fashion, considering the company is selling rubber fuck puppets over the internet. There are no tag lines for "extra tight pussy" or "bitches that won't complain." In fact, the sex dolls designed for men, so far, are presented with no more innuendo than fashion models seen in advertisements for The Gap or as "social media influencers" on Instagram.

What has the response been from lawmakers, "sex-positive" blogs and otherwise "progressive" media outlets, when it comes to female sex dolls designed for men? Well, earlier in the year, sex dolls were labeled as a threat to women, according to the usual suspects of outrage generation (*The Guardian* ran an article titled *Should We Ban Sex Robots While We Have The Chance?*). Last month, it was headlines about how sex dolls are hackable dangers that can be programmed to kill, if the wrong autistic Russian pimp somehow obtained one. A dialogue regarding sex workers whose jobs are threatened by sex dolls may sound like a bad Lifetime movie, but a recent controversy in the U.K. over sex doll brothels seems

to be on par with the Satanic panic of the '80s, in terms of real-versus-perceived threat to society. The general consensus seems to be that female sex dolls, designed for men, are misogynistic hate crimes with functional genitalia. Again, these dolls are being advertised as "alternative(s) to companionship," not "female genocide."

Aside from hacky comedians and internet memes, I have yet to see a single, serious objection, on the part of men, regarding sex toys designed for women. In fact, I know plenty of dudes who use dildos on their partners. No confident man (or woman) should be threatened by something that requires a USB charger to facilitate an orgasm. I know, as the world's greatest lover, that my male ego will never be so fragile as to be threatened by anything named "Rabbit," unless we're talking rap battles. Still, according to neo-fauxmenist bloggers everywhere, sex dolls designed for men usually fall somewhere between Swastikas and Confederate Flags, in terms of what they represent.

That was, until last month, when news headlines announced the next advancement in cutting-edge technology, designed for women, set to hit the market by 2019. Someone better Tweet to @BellHooks, because the gender gap has closed! Ladies, gentlemen, non-binary and androgynous, the first male sex doll, designed for women, has hit the market. And, according to all the progressive, super-woke, feminist-allied media outlets, what does it offer? Male companionship? An alternative to players and pick-up artists? A safe replacement for predatory men? No, of course not...according to the headlines, this new male sex doll features "BIONIC PENIS." With a firm jawline, chiseled abs, blue eyes and white skin, this poster boy for the ideal Aryan cyborg features unbeatable, super-advanced robot cock.

Okay, let's review. The community of supposed neckbeards and misogynists who survive on a diet of Mt. Dew and rape jokes is pushing for dolls that offer "companionship." These dolls are being shunned for objectifying women, by the same news outlets that are now screaming from the mountain

tops about “bionic penis.” Something something equality of the sexes, blah blah hypocrisy, yadda yadda current year. To quote the general MGTOW sentiment, “If it makes men happy with no benefit to women, it’s oppression. If it makes women happy with no benefit to men, it’s empowering.” This may be a jaded, if not extreme, view of the sexes, but goddamn if it isn’t true (at least when it comes to the public perception of sex dolls).

Radical fauxmenists will tell you that sex dolls are not only a threat to women, but that they reduce women to their sexual components (while, at the same time, shopping for dildos). What’s even more ironic, is that if the argument that male utility can be replaced by robots, that’s something men learned centuries ago. Why do you think we have unions battling automation? Where men can be replaced, they’ve already been replaced. But, if the only utility offered by women, to men, was sex, Las Vegas would look like Detroit by now. The great sex robot takeover would have gone down in the early ‘80s, putting all the sex workers out of business and leaving abandoned brothels all over Nevada. But, as it turns out, “escorts” do just that. Guys enjoy the company of a beautiful woman for more reasons than coitus.

So, these male sex dolls, which are being touted as a straight up “replacement for men” (not “male companionship,” not “predatory men,” but just “men”) are applauded for having “bionic cock.” Nowhere in the advertisements regarding sex dolls designed for men is there a claim that the dolls can replace women altogether, rendering them useless to society. The only regressive objection I’ve seen to sex dolls designed for females is that they are “heteronormative,” but I’m guessing that this was a buzzword used for garnish, as I’ve never met a gay dude that wants flacid cock from a fat man (news flash, bloggers: men don’t care about media representations of body image, otherwise Homer Simpson would have hit the gym at least once).

So, what does this say about gender dynamics?

Well, men want companionship and women want a good, hard cock. The ways in which sex dolls are being marketed speak volumes to the *actual* desires of men and women, as well as what society is currently lacking in terms of what men and women have to offer. Unlike the postmodern bullshit that floats around in most causal dialogue regarding sex-positivity, gender norms, etc., the reality of our sex drives is currently being measured by the market, and the style

of sex dolls being sold reflects (gasp) traditional standards of beauty. As a general rule, women are hypergamous, i.e., they want bigger, better and more. So, they get bionic cock. As a general rule, men are neotenous, meaning that we desire youth and fertility. So, we get Asian girls with giant boobs. Any first-year Gender Studies student can argue all they want about how Amy Schumacher is just as beautiful as Megan Fox, or how women desire Peter Griffin as much as they do Channing Tatum, but the market will decide which dolls sell and which dolls collect dust in the warehouse. Go ahead. Design a five-foot-five male sex doll, with a soy body, cardigan sweater, organic scarf and average-to-small-sized cock. Advertise that he comes complete with “bionic respect for



women” and a liberal studies degree. See how well that shit sells.

Returning to the beginning of this article, what attracts people to simulation games, such as *Second Life*? Well, if I’m an overweight, introverted, awkward person in real life, I can either choose to become a strip club DJ and work myself up to Editorial Chief for a kick-ass magazine that appeals to beautiful women, or I could design a *Second Life* character with chiseled abs, sick afro, business suit and all the stuff that makes ladies wet. The third option, that being a daily workout routine, complete with self-reflection, discipline and responsibility, is achievable, but it takes too much effort. But, if I put my mind to it and had robotic dick surgery, I could *become* the man that women are paying to fuck. With enough effort, kindness, exercise and self-awareness,

any woman could become the sex doll that their boyfriend replaced them with. And this, my friends, is the curse of the post-modern narrative. Sadly, most people are attracted to physically fit, honest and positive people. Sex dolls are proving this. Otherwise, there would be breast size options on the male dolls and an option for the female dolls to come with recurring billing every few months, backed by the threat of jail time.

The types of sex dolls being marketed speak volumes to what actual men and women are lacking, in terms of sexual marketplace value. You can’t sell water to a fish. People seek out what is not currently available, to meet needs that aren’t being met. The sex dolls being marketed to women reflect a style of man that would be labeled as a proponent of “toxic masculinity” or “alpha male bullshit.” In reality, there are only so many sensitive male feminists a girl can take home, before she forgets what it feels like to orgasm. The types of sex dolls being marketed to men would be labeled as “oppressed, silenced” women who are “sex objects” and nothing more. In reality, there are only so many “accept me at my worst and deal with whatever STD I bring home from Coachella” women that a man can date, before he just wants to cut out the bullshit and have someone to cuddle with. Sex dolls are the canary in the gender war coal mine. Go ahead and argue all you want about body image and gender roles, but the market doesn’t lie. Right now, men are paying thousands of dollars to avoid being cheated on, given an STD or having their incomes taken away. Women are paying thousands of dollars for a hard cock, attached to man that doesn’t work at Starbucks.

Post-article disclaimer to make sure folks know I’m not some problematic caveman: does this article completely ignore the LGBT angle? Very much so. But, unlike straight men and women, gay people are judged regarding their bedroom habits almost immediately upon meeting someone, whether overtly or unconsciously. So, I’m just gonna assume that the LGBT community is light years ahead of the straight demographic, in terms of dealing with judgment related to sexual practices. This article is “heteronormative” because, well, the idea of fucking a plastic woman ordered from a website promoted by a monkey who flings poop, or purchasing a robot man with a “bionic dick” are, arguably, topics for straight dudes and hetero chicks.



A woman with long dark hair is posing on a wooden shelf. She is wearing a black lace bodysuit and high heels. The background is a white subway tile wall with wooden shelves and metal brackets. The woman is smiling and looking at the camera.

Abby
from
The Gold Club

EXOTIC
PINUP FEBRUARY
2018



PRESIDENTS & Porn

A RETROSPECTIVE
BY RAY MCMILLIN

Last month, several “news” outlets re-reported a story regarding President Trump, in which The Donald supposedly spanked a pornstar, Stormy Daniels, with a copy of *Forbes*. This isn’t exactly a recent incident, but apparently the hush money just ran out. I mean, does anyone actually read magazines anymore? In response, the porn industry echoed a sentiment—that being, “We don’t want to be associated with Trump. Please don’t put his name in the same news headlines as us.”

Pornstars don’t want to have their reputation tainted by the leader of the free world—now that is something. We’re talking about an industry whose product categories range from “teen creampie” to “pregnant gangbang,” not wanting to be associated with an arguably successful, powerful person. How awful do you have to be, to have your shittiness outshine your trillions of dollars? I mean, I’m not the most radical leftist, but goddamn, Donald...you done fucked up hard. Give it a few years and we’ll be reading headlines, such as, “Ku Klux Klan Fears Trump Endorsement Has Hurt Recruitment Numbers” or “10 Ways The Trump Administration Has Harmed Country Music.” The Donald’s ability to burn his most stable bridges actually makes me jealous—the guy is like Kanye West, minus any talent or humility. But, this isn’t a political think piece about the current state of things. Rather, I’d like to go back through the years and draw attention to the relationships other presidents

have shared with the adult entertainment industry.

Believe it or not, various Commander-In-Chiefs have had unique relationships with the porn industry. Yes, even our most recent golden child, Big Poppa Barack. But, let’s start back when the porn industry was still extremely underground.

J.F.K.

The relationship between Marilyn Monroe and Kennedy isn’t exactly a secret—I’m pretty sure they include a section about it in history textbooks. But, it is worth noting, simply because Marilyn appeared nude in the first issue of *Playboy* and, in the early ‘50s, *Playboy* was the closest thing to RedTube or *Hustler*. Hell, even *Exotic* would be considered super hardcore, by the standards of yesteryear. The then-President was said to have been having an affair with Monroe, as on his 45th birthday, Marilyn gave Kennedy the equivalent of a private dance, while singing “Happy Birthday” in a sultry fashion. This has become a meme and it’s not exactly a dark secret.

What most folks don’t know about, is that Kennedy was a documented freak. Two incidents speak to J.F.K.’s dark, sexual past, in a way that would make tabloids, even in the current year. First, we have the White House intern and former church administrator, Mimi Alford. At only 19, Mimi claims her virginity was taken by Kennedy, who had previously requested that she per-

form sexual acts on the President’s friends, while J.F.K. watched. Now, 19 in the days of J.F.K., adjusted for sexual marketplace value inflation, is on par with 35 to 40, in 2018 years. But, what was not socially accepted in the ‘50s and ‘60s, was J.F.K.’s relationship with male friend Lem Billings. According to Billings, he and Kennedy—friends since prep school—shared several rounds of oral sex, with Billings always being on the receiving end. I always cite Kennedy as “one of the good ones,” when explaining politics to my girlfriends, but man, that was some progressive shit right there—blowjobs in the oval office, before television was colorized. Plus, there are no search results for “stain on dress,” when searching Kennedy’s sex scandal details—Monica could learn a thing or two from J.F.K., about the benefits of spitting versus swallowing.

Nixon



Dick Nixon is somewhat of an enigma. Even though his administration is synonymous with “political scandals” in every sense of the word, there is very little evidence to suggest that Nixon ever had an affair with a pornstar. And, let’s not kid ourselves here—Pat Nixon wasn’t exactly Michelle Obama or Melania Trump, in terms of sex appeal. So, it is pretty ironic that Nixon is directly (if not, accidentally) responsible for the mainstream acceptance of pornography.

The Watergate scandal, in which Nixon’s

team pulled some *GTA V*-type tactics to obtain access to secret, government documents from the Democrats, put Nixon on the map. This incident involved wire-tapping, coverups and all sorts of cool shit, that for some reason, has yet to be made into a feature-length Hollywood film. However, what was turned into a mainstream, cinematic release, was a porn film titled *Deep Throat*. Although the plot and production value of *Deep Throat* was nothing special, in terms of attracting a larger audience than other spank flicks in the '70s, the film's title was also used as a nickname, to refer to one of the Watergate incident's most famous informants. This is on par with a porn film titled "Kato" hitting the theaters during the O.J. trials. So, much like the creator of Pepe The Frog had to publicly distance himself from the amphibian meme's association with the alt-right, Nixon attempted to draw attention away from his scandal, by calling for a boycott of *Deep Throat*. But, unlike the creator of a sabotaged meme, Nixon's attempts to "boycott porn, because porn" were ridiculously extreme, and due to time and place, they backfired. With the then-President calling for arrests of the producers, actors and exhibitors of the film *Deep Throat*, naturally, the porn-viewing public did what any other purveyors of porn would do—and they supported the film in droves. "You can't do that," in the 1970s, translated to "Fuck, not only are they doing it, but they're doing it in large numbers." Porn was not immune to this rule. So, in short, Nixon invented the Streisand effect (telling people not to look at something, makes them want to look at it). If only Nixon's war on drugs had the same effect as his war on porn.

Reagan

Ronald Reagan is a G-rated sweetheart of a President. Known for opening the door for Trump (and, by 2020, Oprah or The Rock), Reagan was our country's first celebrity-turned-President, having earned his Hollywood star by making a movie about putting a monkey to bed. Reagan's wife, Nancy, had an odd amount of sex appeal for an older woman, but she never appeared nude in her mid-50s. However,

the couple's daughter, Patti Reagan, did. A few years ago, in a 2011 issue of *More* (no, I've never heard of it, either), Patti Reagan posed nude...at 58 years old! I can't find the photos, but I'm already gonna give her props. Any post-menopausal woman with the guts to strip down for the masses is my



kind of lady. But, this was not Patti's first time showing off her Ronalds and Nancy.

In 1994, Patti posed nude in, and on the cover of, *Playboy*. Even though she used her interview to open up about her history of drug addiction and other personal traumas, the most controversial element of Patti's 1994 appearance in *Playboy* was the cover shoot, in which Patti appears topless, with the hands of a muscular, black male covering her breasts. This may seem like Nickelodeon material today, but in the conservative '80s, race relations were on par with, well, current levels of tension. Something about a celebrity-turned-politician breeds racism...I have no idea why this is and maybe it will change once Denzel runs ("Washington For Washington" is a damn good slogan, just sayin'). Let's just say that the First Daughter having her nips covered up by a sweaty brotha, like an ad for Spike Lee Fragrance, rattled some conservative cages (even in the mid-'90s).

Clinton

Okay, this is an easy one—the dude has an entire Wikipedia page dedicated to women who have filed sexual assault charges against good ol' Slick Willie, but his wife ran for president as a feminist, so...I guess he's off the hook? Looking past cigars and

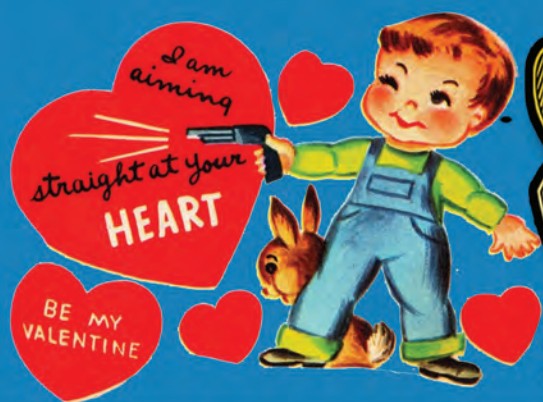
stains, though, one will find a pretty amazing photo of Bill Clinton floating around the inter-webs, with Bill sharing one hell of a smile with porn actresses Brooklyn Lee and Tasha Reign.

For whatever reason, these two adult starlets were at the same dinner as Clinton. The girls saw Bill from across the way, and according to reputable news source and modern day A.P. substitute, *TMZ*, Lee claims "Secret Service guy called (Lee) back and (to) come over and hang out and take pictures and stuff. (Bill)'s really, really sweet. I just told him that I loved him, I thought he was a great President and he just kind of winked and smiled." Bill Clinton later claimed to have no idea who the porn starlets were, but having become accustomed to gorgeous, sexy women, I'm assuming that it was just another day in Willieland. This is literally the most dirt I can

find on the guy—which, is of no surprise. When you're swimming in pussy, a few extra drops don't even hit your radar.

Obama

And, with this, we conclude our list of presidential relationships with pornstars, in trend with the digital age. Although his wife is bangin' and he has no history of sex scandals, it is not Obama himself that gets Barack's administration a spot in this list, but his Twitter account. The verified, blue-checkmarked, totally-not-run-by-a-team-of-interns Twitter account, @BarackObama follows dozens and dozens of pornstars. From Asa Akira to Nikki Benz, several of the accounts followed by Obama are run by pornstars, with bios such as "I have an award-winning asshole" (Joanna Angel). Does this mean that Barack is secretly sextweeting with our fellow adult entertainers? Probably not. But, in a perfect world, the man has at least used his power once or twice, to put a smile on the face of a working girl. If any of our former Presidents can be trusted with naked women, I'm gonna put my bets on Obama. And, no—I'm not a fan of the mass deportations, wars for oil or deficit that his administration left behind. But, at least he seems the type to ask before grabbing a pussy.



SLUTSCAPADES

By Dr. Helen Shepard

Slut (noun) — a person who likes sex for its own sake and doesn't give a fuck what you think about it.

Slut it up (verb) — to share the pleasure of your body with whomever you please.

To me, Valentine's Day brings memories of exchanging Valentine's cards with friends and frenemies in elementary school. The anxiety induced in that maudlin holiday is indescribable, particularly, how to select a card that encapsulates/obscures my feelings for everyone in my class, because if you are going to give one person a card, you have to give EVERYONE a card—because Communism, that's why. Do you want candy, Helen? Then, you have to be a happy Communist and participate.

I wonder how many trees were cut down to make those Ninja Turtles and Batman cards that filled my pink construction paper heart pocket and expressed such sentiments such as, "You're bodacious," "I love you more than pizza!" or "When Batman activates his bat-computer, it says you're the one for me!" Now I suppose it's *Frozen* and *Hamilton*-flavored cards and, next year, it will be something else filling our landfills.

Are there Gorillaz Valentine's cards yet? Someone should get on that. Ah, a Google search tells me, yes, someone has got on that. Good for them.

It's baffling to me, that when something becomes successful in American pop culture, someone is there to capitalize on it in the most banal way. And, where is this more evident than in Valentine's Day cards? You can buy cards for nearly every remotely popular franchise and this has even promoted fans to make tribute cards to share them on Instagram and Pinterest—full of corny puns tied to the latest pop culture obsessions, be it Rick and Morty, *Stranger Things* or even Grumpy Cat.

What content creator dreams of their precious characters one day being so dispensable, that they are published on hundreds of thousands of small pieces of paper, next to cheesy phrases? Was the original designer of Slimer from *Ghostbusters* sketching out ideas with a green-colored pencil thinking, "How

will this look on a three-by-four inch Valentine's card and will someone be able to pull off a pun that doesn't make everyone think of a money shot?"

The word "shot" makes me think of *Reservoir Dogs*. Has someone made *Reservoir Dogs* Valentine's Day cards yet? Someone should really get on that.

Maybe you, dear reader, would like to play along? Simply think of your beloved's favor-



ite pop culture obsession and make your own card, with a double entendre in that lexicon. Be your paramour's interest lie in film, comics, video games, television or internet memes, with a little creativity, you can make something that they will cherish for a whole 2.5 seconds.

Here is where you'll have to stretch your thinking muscle, take a cliché love idiom and twist it somehow to make it a riff on

that character's backstory. Shall I give you an idea to get you started? Take the phrase, "head over heels." Trade one word with another—Kylo Ren or a Storm Trooper might say, "I'm helmet over heels in love with you, Valentine!" Or, say the character has some recognizable shoes—Cyndi Lauper could be saying, "I'm head over kinky boots for you, cutie." Congrats, you played along. Slow clap.

Every card riffs on a familiar phrase from poetry or songs. Try writing ones based on phrases like, "We are a match made in heaven" (retch), or "I'm sweet on you," "You had me at hello," "Your love fills my heart" (gag) or go Shakespearean, with a variation on "if music be the food of love, play on."

Which brings me to my favorite Valentine's cliché—a phrase so baffling, it keeps poets up at night, pondering its origin and meaning. It's in a cringe-inducing Stevie Wonder song and on so many Hallmark cards, that you could stack them and reach Lady Liberty's boob. I'm talking, of course, about, "I love you from the bottom of my heart."

The bottom is where the best love comes from (obviously), like a bottle of wine with sediment. Perhaps it means, "I love you from the heart located in my bottom" (a cute nickname for the prostate). When you read this phrase in a card, or hear it in a schmaltzy ballad, you will no longer be able to resist thinking of it as a stand in for, "Please stimulate my bottom heart, gently at first and after you've cut your nails. Happy Valentine's Day."

Dr. Helen Shepard is a Clinical Sexologist based in Eugene. You can contact Helen with any sex-related questions or show off your custom made Star Trek: TNG Valentine's before you hit "send" and totally blow it with that cute co-worker in accounting. Helen can be reached at EugeneSexology@Gmail.com.

SHADOWBOXING EMOTIONAL BIASES

LOVE IN A PLAIN BROWN ENVELOPE: BY JAIME DUNKLE

This essay is third in a series, based on the suggested writing assignments in Antero Alli's The Eight-Circuit Brain.

Each essay in this series delves into a specific circuit. This essay combines (C2) emotional power and (C6) psychic intuition, uniting both to open the doors of perception that raise empathy and deflect conflict.

Alli's system of eight-circuit praxis emphasizes the psycho-spiritual with exercises that link the body, mind and spirit complex. It's my opinion that this is the most accessible occult curriculum available because of its rejection of dogma.

A brief history lesson: Timothy Leary created the eight-circuit model of consciousness theory with the intent to map intelligence and experiential knowledge. Robert Anton Wilson expanded the model. Alli developed it into an exploratory practice.

My definitions of the eight circuits change as I continue my on-going experiments. Currently, I label them as (C1) bio security, (C2) emo power, (C3) logos, (C4) community, (C5) pleasure, (C6) psychic intuition, (C7) synchronicity and (C8) dream.

The circuits run in pairs: C1/C5, C2/C6, C3/C7 and C4/C8. My previous essays handled them individually, but it made more sense to combine C2/C6 here, because it would be too pedantic to solely give the spotlight to my inner Morrissey.

What I'm about to share with you can be used against me forever. I should be more reluctant to disclose my psychological processes to a bunch of strangers reading a titty magazine, but what the hell? Most of this is probably on Facebook, anyway.

Herein is my confession, of dualistic emotional biases, which falls under the second circuit, because it rules emotions, feelings, boundaries, status and power. It's the dominion of domination/submission, in all its internal and external emanations. This is where negative and positive emotional biases form and amass.

After acknowledging these biases, I thought my life would get easier. Instead, I've found myself at the end of a relationship and at the beginning of deeper self-awareness.

I'll start with the negative emotional biases, because that's where my mind automatically turns first.

Upon closer inspection, I've learned that I discredit my own feelings when someone discounts them. I second guess myself and worry I must be wrong. This is unhealthy, because all feelings are valid, even when they're ridiculous. Even though I know that to be true, I'm easily bullied by anyone who has a hold of my heart. I turn into the opposite of my normal-spirited self. I shrink. I falter. I wither.

I handed an ex-boyfriend a real-time journal, of all the moments I felt myself falling in love with him. I thought it was one of the sweetest things I ever did for someone. The ending included my feelings of abandonment when he ghosted me for two weeks to go on a drinking binge, before he soberly dumped me upon his return. I didn't try to get back together with him—I simply gave him the romance diary as a memento, since I only wrote it to give to him someday.

"I'll come back for you," he told me. But, somehow, I was the manipulative one. I questioned whether it was true—had I unconsciously been manipulative, when I gave him the love ballad? Was I that much of a diabolical mastermind? I stupidly questioned myself and considered it. I later chalked it up to dodging a bullet. Words of wisdom: if he's an avid Guided By Voices fan, RUN.

During this reflective exercise, I also realized I negate my emotions when I get too hopeful. Unconsciously, I'm afraid that all positivity is phony baloney and what I want will be taken away from me, before I can even enjoy it. Abandon, lest ye be abandoned. I'm eager to undo this imprint, before I ruin yet another chance at bliss.

Before I wallow in my deepest regret, let's flip the script to positive emotional biases.

I'm a lover, not a fighter. I thrive on collaboration, not conflict. I'm a bit introverted, but I love my people. I'm pretty good at trusting my initial feelings, but it feels even nicer and validating, when I discuss a matter with the people closest to me. And, they corroborate and expound perspective.

I usually trust my misgivings, when I step back and see the bigger picture. I'm analytical by nature, so I tend to look for patterns.

If my apprehension intuitively identifies an overarching recurrence, I know I can continue to trust my gut and its 500 billion neurons. My gut has helped me immensely in life. I think it's absolutely linked to the psychic intuition of the sixth circuit.

That raises the sixth circuit conundrum: is it enhanced perception or paranoia?

I like how Alli calls accelerated perception a state of being "unsane," which he says is "beyond sanity, but also not insane." Full disclosure: I unabashedly consider myself unsane. Life would be so boring without a little magic.

Alas, the line between intuition and paranoia sometimes blurs for me. I fine tune Channel 6 and look for associations attached to the subject at hand. If there's reluctance or mistrust, I check myself and ask if I'm just expecting the worst because of my own negative emotional biases and past experiences. I turn inward and search for patterns within myself. I turn outward and look for patterns in others. If I recognize a behavioral pattern, it confirms my intuition is on point. Familiar bad territory always hard-wires my gut to send me hesitation.

It's counterintuitive, but it's harder for me to accept positive intuitions. I often stress I'm being too delusional and self-important. It's much more difficult for me to receive a good feeling with hope and optimism. Back to that imprint of self-doubt and self-sabotage, disguised as self-preservation, that I'm working hard to undo. It's such a parasite.

The psycho-spiritual elixir of (C2) emo power and (C6) psychic intuition reminds me to control what's in my actual realm of control. I can't set fire to a possibility, so that I can avoid a possible fire. That's success avoidance and it needs to be avoided. Instead, I must accept circumstance without expectation—love, without harming myself in the process. And, always trust my gut, which will warn me, if you use any of this confessional to mess with my head later.

Jaime Dunkle mixes the profound and the profane in her prose, with an altruism that stems from a tenure as a journalist. Jaime's stories range from fiction to personal narrative and often blur between the two. For more info go to: JaimeDunkle.com or [@JaimeDunkle](https://twitter.com/JaimeDunkle). No creepers allowed.

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MR. PEEP'S / MR. PEEP'S TOO (2) 162
13355 SW Henry St | (503) 643-6645
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709 SE 122nd Ave | (503) 257-8617
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PUSSYCATS 134
3414 NE 82nd Ave | (503) 384-2794
5226 SE Foster Rd | (971) 255-0133
5141 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy | (503) 245-4393
Daily 24 hours

SHEENA'S G SPOT 137
8315 SW Barbur Blvd | (503) 972-1111
Daily 24 hours

SILVER SPOON 139
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SPARTACUS LEATHERS 141
300 SW 12th Ave | (503) 224-2604
Mon-Wed 10am-11pm, Thu-Sat 10am-12am,
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SYLVIA'S PLAYHOUSE 163
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Vancouver: 4811 NE 94th Ave | (360) 254-1126
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17935 SW Tualatin Valley Hwy | (503) 259-2310
Daily 6am-2am

TORCHED ILLUSIONS II 169
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SEE YOU IN COURTSHIP

"Hey Ray, why don't you write about all the sex abuse accusations going down in Hollywood? Isn't that something adult publications need more of?" That's the message I've been getting on Facebook, every time another celebrity is accused of doing terrible shit to some woman. To be honest, I've always believed that anyone involved in upper-level entertainment or politics is part of some sort of child sex ring (or, at least rented out a Corey or two during the '80s). But, when these stories start to pop up in circles not owned by Disney, my interest peaks. I've been on both sides of this issue, having been part of a well-justified witch hunt against a creeper, to being falsely accused of nonsense, by one of the women involved in said witch hunt.

After reflecting on years and years of really fucked-up sex, that has never once resulted in a court case or news headline, I realized that it's been two decades since I've had to be reminded of the rules, specifically those related to consent. Anyone in their late teens to early thirties does not have the same fortune. Put simply, I'm wondering if Millennials and Gen Z have any idea what it's like to be "in the moment," while under the sheets. So, I did some research ('shrooms), reflected on what I found and came to the obvious conclusion: whether Hollywood, D.C. or West Burnside, men and women have forgotten how to interact, and only strip clubs can save them.

Hear me out...

Handbook For The Recently Accused

The discussion surrounding the #MeToo movement

has brought some great points to the surface. Sexual assault is bullshit. False accusations are bullshit. Folks don't like bullshit and there seems to be a lot of it, so let's fix it. Whether or not you're a woke-ass male feminist who thinks that anything less than sober, enthusiastic consent constitutes rape, or a woke-ass male feminist who was recently accused of rape, all sides can agree that the definition of what constitutes "rape" has become dangerously ambiguous.

Take, for instance, the controversy surrounding well-known male feminist comedian and recently accused creeper, Aziz Ansari. A woman who had been on a date with Aziz recounted a tale to *Babe.net* that is too long to print here. In short, "Grace" (not her real name) claims that Aziz (perhaps his real name) and her shared a night of violently awkward sex. She regretted this sex, questioned whether or not it was consensual at the time, took her story to print and the rest is predictable history. The tone surrounding nearly every Facebook discussion was split evenly between, "This woman suffered worse than Anne Frank" and "This woman was asking for it, what did she expect going home with a handsome, powerful, alpha figure like the guy from *Master Of None*?" This is the discussion that surrounds every public accusation of sexual assault. To hell with nuance and gray areas, it's either true love or sexual assault—no middle ground needed. Hell, the one thing that the genders appear to agree on is the notion that it's always the other one's fault. But, here I am, the radical centrist, suggesting that it's not as simple as witch-hunting and slut-shaming.

As a logical, rational person over the age of 35, I can't say I'm not confused. I'm used to the good old days, when a girl would ask me to choke her during sex, so she could cum faster, but later on, when I didn't want to pay for dinner, I'd be told that I was a selfish prick. There would be conflict, but none of it ever led to accusations. Flash forward to the current year and you'll read think pieces on how any sign of regret after sex constitutes rape, or how not sleeping with someone because they're plus-sized or trans is a sign of hate—on the same website. "Don't like my body? That's a hate crime. Like my body? Hands off, it's my property." This is why I have all but stopped dating (I like to know the rules of the game I'm playing) and am waiting for the perfect androgynous, used-to-be-religious, coffee-cart-chick-turned-budtender to walk into my life, before even thinking about sex again. And, I'm not alone—I know tons of straight dudes who have all but given up on women. But, do you know who hasn't? Rich, powerful creepers from the film industry and/or political realm. So, as long as the only people having sex are predators and victims, the "men are scum and women are sluts" narrative will continue. Which, to be honest, is bullshit. Mainly, because the solution is so fucking simple.

Landlines, Fax Machines & Second Base

I have a radical hypothesis regarding why there seems to be such a tense environment in the land of sex and dating: what if—and, hear me out here—we can learn from our parents? You know how "kids these days" are too busy sexting each other on PokeTube or whatnot, to enjoy the whole "courting pro-

cess" myth that our ancestors believed in? Perhaps, just perhaps...there is a gray area between one-night stands and radical, traditionalist marriage. And, here comes the hard part...I propose that the absence of this gray area is exactly what's generating the daily "Naive, Powerful Male Accused Of Acting Like A Naive, Powerful Male" news stories (as well as localized versions of this played-out bullshit).

Put simply, I hypothesize that the removal of the courting process (and, to some extent, traditional gender roles in heterosexual relationships) has led to a complete inability for the current generation of young adults to foster normal, healthy sex lives (and, I need to clarify that by "normal, healthy sex lives," I mean sex that doesn't end up in the fucking headlines, that's all...your lifestyle is fine, as long as it doesn't produce mugshots). Further, I propose that if women accept that men just want to fuck them most of the time, they could *possibly* avoid the shock they receive when a movie producer asks them to unzip for a role in *Smurfs 4* that's clearly going to another actress.

Now, it seems odd for someone who works in the sex industry to be championing courtship and relationships. One-night stands, sex-positivity, consent and kink are all well-

respected by myself and anyone who writes for, reads or otherwise endorses this publication (or, any other sex-worker-focused media). But, unlike most of society, the sex industry is where firm, verbal consent of an enthusiastic nature is always a given—if you're fucking someone's wife at the sex club or going to town on your co-worker during a porn shoot, you better be up-to-date on your consent talk, STI history, etc. We are the exception, not the rule—not every sexual encounter falls into the poly lifestyle, swinger club or hook-up culture. There are no bouncers or security guards in the average person's bedroom. Open sexuality is fun, sure, but lots of regular, non-sex-industry folks are just looking to "date."

What's that, you ask? Oh, my bad...

So, "dating" is a thing that people over 35 used to do, back when we weren't able to learn everything about a stranger after an hour of light social media stalking. Often times, we had to walk two miles, in the snow, both ways, just to ask a someone what their favorite band was. Plus—and, I know this sounds insane—we'd often engage in a week or two's worth of "phone calls" (think text messages, but with your mouth), just to see if we'd vibe with our potential crushes. This phase is known as the "courting process,"

during which time, all sorts of problematic, gendered behavior and archaic traditions are used to determine compatibility between two people. I know...ancient and outdated.

Let me drop the sarcasm for a few sentences and spell it out: not everyone is capable of casual sex, and because of this, grown adults have no idea how to interact in the bedroom. Although the sexual revolution is an awesome (and, arguably necessary) stage of societal evolution, the one thing that we've lost is an appreciation for traditional, basic concepts of courtship.

I can already hear the accusations of "heteronormativity" or "conservative bullshit," but, trust me—these complaints aren't coming from the LGBT community or classical liberals—they're coming from jaded Liberal Studies graduates, who are experiencing cognitive dissonance after wasting their youth on "not needing anyone else" and "playing the field." I know, because I'm speaking from experience; seeing happiness on the faces of two people who don't appear to be gearing up for BDSM and group sex makes me jealous. I *wish* I could get off on vanilla monotony. Sometimes, the traditional ideas are worth acknowledging—you don't have to be a devout Christian to agree that murder is bad and wine is good.



So, much like I don't want the yuppies at Denny's giving me and my two tattooed dates dirty looks, I'm not gonna shake the problematic stick at people with weird fetishes, such as "appreciation for second base" or "commitment." I can respect single, working, non-committal feminists who have no plans on supporting patriarchal concepts of marriage, *and at the same time*, I can respect my sister for spitting out a kid every time she's had intercourse with the guy who took her virginity after proposing a year prior.

What I cannot support, though, is living among adult-aged children who do not understand reality.

Men Are From Earth, Women Are From Earth

There exists a gray area between "I know they're asking for it" and "I regretted it, so it must be rape" and that area is discovered through courtship. Let's use the Aziz Ansari and Louis C.K. incidents as an illustration; in both cases, the "I didn't know she wasn't going to enjoy it" excuse is made. Yes, men aren't mind readers and women should not expect us to be. Still, successful, well-adjusted adults have no fucking clue how to behave around the opposite sex. And how would they? Hashtags are not intended to be legal or ethical advice. "Yes means yes" is a phrase invented by someone who has never had a conversation with a woman. Guys need to learn the subtle art of decoding what she means, when she says loaded words, like "fine" or "okay" (these are translated to "no" and "no," by the way). Also, get this: if you date someone for a few months, you tend to find out whether or not they like to be throat fucked while watching you masturbate. On the rare chance that I do opt for one-night stands, I make sure there's at least a prior one-afternoon stand in which to discuss boundaries, as well as a morning-after stand to discuss which Walgreen's still sells the cheap Plan B.

We are so far down the "everything is a social construct" rabbit hole, that even suggesting women or men *generally* have nuanced, tough-to-decode (but, predictable and hard-wired) sexual behaviors, is taboo. In progressive cities like Portland or Seattle, it's not easy to have open, honest discussions about traditional gender roles, without being accused of anti-feminist, transphobic mansplaining. But, faux-news blogs like *Buzzfeed* are not good places to learn about sex. Uber-progressive

and/or alt-right SubReddits are not the same thing as actual Sex Education courses, taught by people with degrees that don't end in the word "studies." Fact is, male and female courtship exists, all throughout nature and far beyond our realm of Tinder and Netflix. I believe the Bloodhound Gang had a song about this.

Everything I Know About Dating, I Learned From Strip Clubs

Although there is minimal hope left, there still exists one place where men and women can learn how to act, while engaging in romantic behaviors and subtly acknowledging the importance of gender roles associated with male-and-female interactions: strip clubs.



That's right. I am suggesting that attending strip clubs will teach any straight or bi man to be a decent man, capable of understanding women in a sexual context, while avoiding trips to jail and/or TMZ. Dudes, from all walks of life, should ditch the life coach and just get as many private dances as possible. No, guys are (probably) not going to end up having sex with a dancer. However, they will learn nuance, consent, how to talk to a woman whose sweaty breasts are showing, etc. When a dude is not getting private dances, he can go to the bar and buy a shot for a dancer, tip her for her time, then ask her to

tell him what he's doing wrong with the girl he just met (and how to get her into bed).

In fact, if you're a real baller, you can practice the art of courtship, directly, with any dancer you choose! Learn how and when to give gifts without coming off as creepy. Understand how to cope with jealousy, as your dancer of choice will occasionally spend time with other, more attractive and resourceful customers. Or, what the hell, just come into the club with a few hundred bucks, sit at the rack and learn to keep your fucking hands to yourself, while the dancer on stage gives you a good show. The best part? Since you aren't (legally) allowed to use sex as an endgame or goal with dancers at a strip club, there is no fear of rejection. In fact, every night you attend a strip club, you will expect to leave alone, knowing that the woman you just finessed has no obligation to sleep with you.

Surprisingly enough, by interacting with stark naked women covered in tattoos, guys will learn the art of subtlety. No one walks to the stage, holding a dollar and saying, to the dancer, "I am giving this to you, so that I may stare at your breasts—is that okay?" On the same token, one can learn a lot about entitlement and consent from strippers: no one gets a lap dance and insists, "You just took the time to grind on my dick, that must mean you want sex" (at least not without getting tossed out of the club). Strippers are surprisingly honest, for being so quick to fall into a category that some people would call "fake." Sure, you will get a few that will lie to you, just to flatter your ego and get paid, but that's *exactly* what I'm talking about—you will find those women in the real world, too! See how this all works?

Ladies, you can learn about men from talking with strippers. You'll find out that, regardless of how woke, feminist, progressive, loving, down-with-Snapchat or familiar with the *Hunger Games* franchise guys are, men are only that way because they want to fuck you. However, second and third bases exist and they're not covered in snakes and AIDS. There are plenty of tricks and tips for dealing with the penile-endowed and dancers would love to share them with you. Ask strippers what keeps their best regulars coming back. What do they share with regulars, that they would not share with first-time customers? How can a dancer tell when a guy is getting too aggressive? What does she say to ensure that boundaries are clear, but that the fantasy and

sexuality is not reduced?

It's The Current Year

I don't know how many times I've screamed from the mountain tops about how strippers can save us, but consider this one of my loudest attempts to do so. Everyone, from Hollywood, CA to



Hollywood Transit Center, can learn a thing or two from a naked woman—one who will be up front about using sexuality to obtain resources—which is what happens in nature, regardless of social constructs, hashtags or current-year postmodern bullshit. Most importantly, strippers understand the art of the tease, which is exactly what courtship involves. As Dr. King once said, you can learn a lot about the content of your character, by listening to someone with minimal covering on their skin.

Remember, there is nothing wrong with one-night stands and casual sex. There is also nothing wrong with fast food. Folks just need to learn that the best restaurants require the longest waits, and if you're too hungry in a nice restaurant, you'll forget about manners. This may sound radical, but if a guy slows his roll a bit and gets to know a woman, chances are he will find out things like whether or not she enjoys deep-throating mediocre actors or watching balding gingers jerk off. And, if women accept that men aren't mind-reading altruists, perhaps there will be less "met for coffee, agreed to give sex a try, and an hour later, wound up traumatized" op-eds in print.

Our society has lost the ability to recognize nuance, subtlety and gray areas. Put it this way, you're reading about middle-ground centrism and rational approach to consensual sex from a free porn magazine, that proudly offers advertising space to escort services and horse porn videos. Meanwhile, *Sexuality Weekly* is printing a checklist of things that, if not addressed during drunk sex, could lead to a felony. What's next? Juggalos marching on Washington for civil rights? Fred Durst talking sense into Donald Trump on Twitter? Lena Dunham defending incest? Oh, wait. That already happened.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I present to you, 2018. Your phone can find you someone to sleep with using complex algorithms and GPS positioning, but you won't have any fucking clue what to do with them when their Lyft drops them off at your apartment. Progress is funny like that.

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TOP

PARTS OF MY CAMPAIGN PLATFORM BY BRAD COX

I have decided to run for President in 2020. I figure, if anyone can just decide to be President these days, then why not me? I have watched things happen this past year, which I just knew the President couldn't get away with. Yet, every single time social media exploded (or, half the media lost their fucking minds), nothing happened. Our supreme leader got his way—every goddamn time. So, while smoking several joints back to back, I came up with a plan to take back our democracy—by taking over absolute control of the US government. Here is my totally rad campaign platform...

1) Declare A State Of Emergency

The President can declare a national emergency and this action greatly increases his power. You may be thinking to yourself, how I could generate an emergency (similar to 9/11)? Turns out, if you're paying attention, there are dozens of reasons one could give, this very second. I ended up deciding to use poverty and violence as my reason. The economic shit show—for the average American—has lead to an increase in crime and, where there is crime, there is violence. It's a lot like smoke and fire in that way. This is how I will stop congress from shitting all over my progress and making it impossible to do anything useful. In addition, if no one buys that, I could always just say..."something, something, something, terrorism."

2) Extort Money From Corporations

We can all agree that corporations don't pay their fair share. But, dozens—if not hundreds—of gigantic corporations do business here, in America. I know better than to go too hard in the paint with corps, though. I have seen what they can do to destroy an enemy. I don't hate money or the successful people who make metric fuck tons of it—I just hate the disparity between the people who have it and the people who don't. It occurs to me, these corps have a pretty sweet deal here

in the US and I don't want to take that from them. I just want to take three-million dollars from every large corporation that is based in the U.S. (or, does any form of business with us).

In return for their cooperation, I won't gut the entire tax structure that pays for their yachts. I'll use that money to fix healthcare, education and infrastructure—creating millions of jobs and making America actually great again.

3) Treat Diplomacy Like It's Actually Useful

Our foreign relations have been completely ruined in only one year. We have taken the stance of a high school bully and, even be-



fore that, it wasn't exactly going well. Sure, we had a pretty decent eight years with our last President, but everyone knows he was using sleight of hand to get away with bombing the shit out of everyone more brown than him—using drones for God's sake. I propose we dispense with the fear of calling out world leaders when they are lying. I know that the way politics works, is that all these people lie to each other and everyone seems to pretend to not know (or notice). Why couldn't the leader of the free world just stand up at the U.N. and say, "No more fucking around, guys. The world is at war and starving, so let's just clean this mess up and move on."

4) Annex Zombie Homes

There are more empty houses than houseless people in America, by a factor of six to one.

I would annex all the empty houses and fill them with people who meet the following criteria: they must not be condemned. They must have a market value of less than two-hundred-thousand dollars. They must have been vacant for more than one year. And, finally, they must be in a location where employment and social services are easily accessible. It makes no sense to put houseless people into rural homes, where they won't have access to bettering themselves easily. Empty homes lower property values for others and generally end up being bad guy clubhouses. Wouldn't it please most homeowners, to not have to deal with those serious problems when they decide to sell and upgrade?

5) Institute A New Type of Term Limit

While I was smoking weed and thinking of how I could fix our country, it also occurred to me that we have a serious flaw in our democracy. For once, I am not talking about the electoral college, although I'd probably get rid of that, too. I am talking about how wildly unqualified and unpopular people can run for a second term and win. I can understand people falling for a gimmick and voting a nutcase in once. But, I can no longer abide these types of leaders getting a second term, because the stupid motherfuckers that voted them in don't care or believe how bad they are. To solve this problem, I will enact a new law that requires a sitting President to have a national approval rating higher than thirty-five percent. This will safeguard democracy in a few ways. But, mainly, it will ensure that we can limit the damage any one President can do by limiting them to one term.

We've allowed ourselves to slide way too far into ruin. Someone has to do something, from the most powerful position in the world to fix it. I don't care about money or power—I just want to live in the country I was promised and not the dystopian reality we have now. So, make sure to register to vote in 2020 and vote for me, so I can make all your Willy Wonka dreams come true.



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STAYING BEYOND THE NIGHT, FLOATING BEYOND OUR BODIES

I want to be worn like a cloak by someone—my body wrapped around their shoulders, warming their soul. Silk on skin. I want to be understood. Buoyant. Floating. Moon close, dark waters, violet orisons. But, dating is a nightmare and it obstructs desire, as my cravings and hopes sink. And, I wake up.

Buried false gold, bad dreams and the bitter distance of the past haunts me.

Men disappoint me right away, and then, I play the action out to see where the scenes go, like I'm composing the score of my dreams. Being a voyeur of my own life is my romantic downfall.

It's trouble. Big trouble. Panicked lust and curiosities keep me awake at night. And, I want sweet dreams—to sleep beside someone. Bodies, unencumbered by pain, suffering, pasts...

I crave intimacy *more* than sex, yet I still want *all the pleasure*. Life as a dream. The dreams of lunar honesty.

I'm always thirsty—for the sea. Salty tides, in my mouth.

My heart is a wilderness—an ocean too deep. I am not an easy girl and I am an even more complex woman. Not because I want to be, but because I am.

In intimacy, my desire is my fear. My bitterness is my sweetness. My confusion is my madness. My joy is my love is my downfall...vulnerability. My life has been in tatters—torn silks. Everything about it has been up and then down. Mercurial. And? Beyond it all, the traumas I experienced thread through my heart like laces, tough laces, encasing me and holding me and threatening penetration.

But, I want to be sewn to the sea—threaded pearls, enrapturing me.

Sex to me means everything. When I cum, I divulge all.

There's divinity between bodies and we are more than just bodies, you know? We are all more than just bodies. The ether connects us, we are fallen and risen—separated by skin—the sin of mortality. This skin, this thin skin...flesh is heavenly, yet bodies keep us apart. Separate, always alone, even in union.

How close may I get? What is the boundary? Of love? Of skin? Of desire?

To sleep beside someone is the truest sleep. Bodies,
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touching—or, not touching.

We are enraptured in dreams, safe, beyond skin, in touch with our lives, though we have left them. The dream space is the holy space—the only place I want to be. *With you, beside you, until you come unto me...*

Yet, intimacy—*true intimacy*—scares me. It's hard for me to sever lust from love, sex from intimacy. Romance.

The romance of it all? And, being doomed by my nature? It's the embodiment of experience; the corporeal question.

Just skin and flesh, and under it all—bones. Nerves to tie the feelings together, blood to keep me moving...a heart?

Sleeping and dreaming. Eyes closed. Or, awake.

But, what is spirit? My moods, moving like the ocean waves of my feelings, as one man once told me.

The tides...

Before he ran away. Because, I was too much.

Too much. Too much. Always too much. These words pound within me, as my heels click-clack down Burnside, because I am always on the same street, you know? Always in the middle of the city. Split in between, like the meeting of my legs—the edge of the horizon. The river, leading to the sea, past the concrete and the city.

And, in the city last night, I met a man...

We had been talking for a while and I could tell that he was kind from these words. But, I never know pure attraction, until I'm up close, where the center of our past memories mingle with sweat and I can smell fear, hormones, death and desire. The stained glass and pains of pleasure. The church of bodies. The waves and the moon.

The threads of our shadows touched and light reflected in our eyes. We looked away from each other at first, because it was too much. But, the night went on and we wandered, the moon unclouded and he came back to my place.

Because we communicated about boundaries and desire beforehand, I felt present. Being a survivor is a serious thing. Meeting potential lovers thrills me, but I sometimes check out.

I need a heart with an anchor and he was willing to stay the night...*and, just hold me.*

I need someone who can be there for me, if we're just roots without the stones when it all falls apart—because, it always does. And, who will pick up the pieces? *Let us dream...let us dream.*

Meeting him was beautiful. Lying next to him afterward. Dreams instantly ushered through me with the scent of nighttime lullabies—flowers opening after midnight. Luscious petals.

To dream beside someone is more intimate for me than anything. It is a trust thing, and for my insomnia heart, the thing I fear the most.

Insomnia. Each night, I struggle with the rising light, that each night I will be up...forever.

I weep when I'm still awake when the morning birds call and sing. My dream of love haunts me, and the absence of love haunts me even more. Love—or, the lack thereof—is a pale ghost who tarnishes and scratches the window panes, like rattling vindictive branches. Love tackles me, grasping at my heart, my lungs, chest, ribs—like an open cage for death.

Capsizing...capsizing...capsizing. The possibilities are endless. The sea is deep.

In the night, in the scent of him, I did not feel the murky fear, the choppy waves, the abrasive storms...I did not feel the squall of anxiety, waves of panic, the undertow.

I could trust in our bodies. And, I slept.

Beside him at dawn, my skin was calm in the gauzy-gray shadows. I floated, watching his half-lit closed eyes and warm rose lips. I knew he needed those sweet dreams, too. And, I knew I needed them even more.

To be had and be held is the sleepest, dreamy-dream. Waking beside you, I felt the moon's glow—pearlescent and luminous. The morning daybreak shuffled in the city, but I still felt rustling sands and the ebb and tide of you.

In our bodies, beyond our bodies—the ritual of rest—I felt the ritual of my skin shutting down and moving beyond. And, into you. And...beyond.

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A woman with long, dark, curly hair is shown from the waist down, wearing a black leotard and high-heeled platform shoes. She is in a dynamic pose, with one leg bent and the other extended. The background is a deep purple with a subtle smoke or mist effect. The word 'FANTASY' is written vertically in large, white, sans-serif capital letters on the right side of the image. On the left, the text '15%' is in large white font, followed by 'Performers Discount' in a white script font. Below that, the text 'You work hard for the money, treat yourself right!' is in white sans-serif font, followed by 'Save on Dancerwear Accessories Shoes and more!' in the same font. At the bottom left, it says 'Shoes by' in a small white font, followed by the 'Pleaser' logo in a white script font. At the bottom right, there is a small white text line: 'See Store for Details - FantasyForAdultsOnly.com' followed by a Facebook icon.


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A smiling woman with long brown hair, wearing a white fur hat, a grey knit sweater, and blue jeans, is sitting in the snow. A husky dog is lying down next to her. The background is a snowy, mountainous landscape. The text "ALASKA" is written in large, stylized red letters at the top. At the bottom, the text "ANCHORAGE CLUB" and "FAIRBANKS CLUB" is written in white letters with black outlines.

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A woman with long brown hair and blue eyes is looking directly at the camera. She is holding a large stack of US dollar bills in her hands, which are visible in the foreground. She is wearing a dark, strapless top. The background is dark and out of focus.

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Surfin' The Web With Ray: THE BEST WORST

BY RAY MCMILLIN

Valentine's Day is here, and like many of you, I'm never sure whether or not my decade-younger-than-I-am partner will be around to share a candle-lit dinner at Applebee's, by the time the fateful day rolls around. So, like any responsible single, I have scoured the web for places to find love. Here are the worst of the best, the best of the worst, or as I like to call them, my "recent bookmarks."

UglySchmucks.com

"In today's day and age, searching for a partner can be such a daunting task. Especially if you're like a lot of us who are not that attractive."

This site has the most honest (and, least compelling) motto I've seen in a grip. It's the same thing as McDonald's saying, "Look, we know you're drunk, why not sober up in our drive-through?" First of all, I'm wondering what's wrong with the established sites that ugly people already use to find love, such as Craigslist and Facebook. Secondly, this seems to take the fun out of online dating, which already involves a lot of turd polishing and guesswork. Half of the fun that comes with meeting someone online, is finding out how much well whiskey it's gonna take to make them look like their profile photos.

So, Ugly Schmucks doesn't just appeal to the unattractive, it appeals to people with low self-esteem. For this reason alone, I will go ahead and give this site my seal of approval. In fact, one could pull a sort of reverse catfish on UglySchmucks.com, by claiming to be an ugly schmuck, but presenting IRL as a five or six. Plus, if you're like me, you don't want to date a narcissistic egomaniac. What kind of self-absorbed Becky or Chad would list an ad on a dating site reserved for the ugly? So, perhaps one will find some cubic zirconia in the rough on UglySchmucks.com. In fact, I'm gonna go ahead and sign up—I've always wondered what it's like to be the most attractive person in the room.

ClownDating.com

"Everybody loves a clown, so let a clown love you."

It was a sad day, when I went to sign up for an account at JuggaLove.com, only to find out that the Juggalette of my dreams will have to wait, as the Insane Clown Posse-related dating site is now a thing of the past. Thankfully, the broader market for circus-themed hook-ups can be filled with ClownDating.com—a website dedi-

ing?" According to CD, "It's no fun looking for love when you're a clown. Behind all the makeup and the red nose is a lonely heart. Clowns are unique entertainers, loved by some, yet feared and hated by others." Damn right, they're hated by others. They're fucking clowns. Clowns deserve to be lonely, especially on Valentine's Day. This site is bad and I feel bad for looking at it.

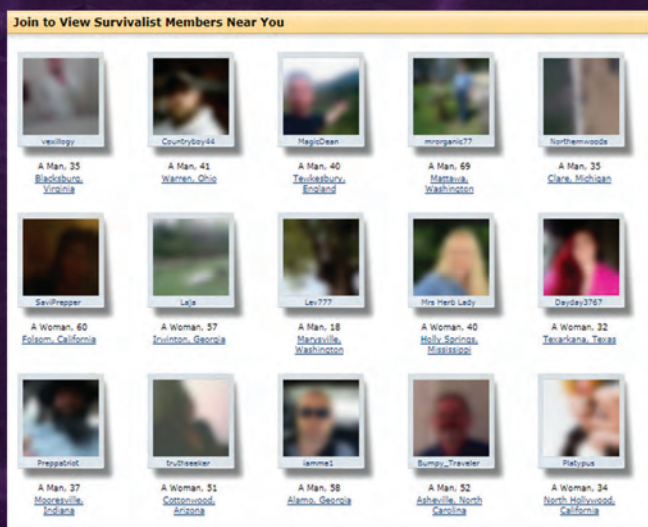
Meet-An-Inmate.com

"Did you know that there are millions of men and women who are currently incarcerated, just waiting for someone to write and exchange life experiences?"

I'm not sure if the hyphens in the URL of this dating site are supposed to be ironic, like miniature prison cell bars, but Jesus Christ with a shank, this is some scary stuff. I'm probably not the first person to admit that it's not uncommon for "sexy" inmates to have hoards of female pen pals—Bundy, Ramirez, Manson...all the greats had their sexy lady fans. But, the header image for Meet-An-Inmate.com features a woman behind bars.

Now, I'm not one to go all "gender wars" in a writeup about prison dating sites, but everyone knows that it's mostly men who end up behind bars. Black dude runs a red light, he gets twenty years in jail. White chick stabs her kids and boyfriend, she gets probation. This is old news. But, damn...what kind of woman actually gets jail time and why am I signing up to be her boo? Oh, shit. It appears WomenBehindBars.com exists, too. Guys...can we dial back the thirst, just a bit?

M-A-I is thorough and educational, in terms of what the site offers to first-time visitors, with advice that anyone can apply to their day-to-day life. "Writing an inmate for the first time can be intimidating at first. We recommend that your first letter be kept short, include a brief description of yourself, your interests and hobbies, and maybe a photo of yourself. This can be a great way to start a conversa-



cated to...you guessed it, dating clowns. However, it's one thing for Juggalos to have a dating site—Juggalos are like Fiends or Deadheads, in terms of already having infected every possible corner of our society. However, clowns as a whole are still rightfully shunned. I fucking hate clowns. I'm pretty sure I was molested by one at some point in time, but even if that never happened, I still hate them. Clowns are cancer. Love Juggalos. Hate clowns. Are we clear?

Two red flags are set off upon landing on ClownDating.com's homepage. The first, is that you're looking at a website dedicated to clown dating. Do I even need to expand here? Second, the featured photos of newly registered members feature folks who look reasonably attractive, normal, well-adjusted and in no way related to the circus. Naturally, the website boldly answers the question, "Why Clown Dat-

T DATING SITES ON THE INTERNET

tion." This is important, because when attempting to make a connection with the lady who tossed her kids out of a moving vehicle during a meth bender, sharing too much tends to kill any element of mystery. "Hi, I'm Steve. How many years of making weapons from toilet paper separate you and I from having coffee?" Do they make Valentine's Day cards for this? As an added bonus, all correspondence is done via "snail mail," as inmates aren't typically allowed to have a *Tinder* account, let alone email.

Kwink.com

"Spend your remaining days with someone that shares your instinct to prepare and survive the end of the world as you know it."

The chemtrails are flying, birth control is turning the frogs gay, and here you are, holed up in a bunker and looking for love. All is fair in love and Infowars, over at Kwink.com—the world's premier dating site for "survivalist singles." I have conflicting emotions about this one. On one hand, making plans for dates is probably easy. Who pays for dinner? Who cares??? We're all going to die soon anyways. Put it on the credit card. On the other hand, jealousy is one thing, but all-out paranoia has to be a relationship killer. Instead of, "Who was that girl and why was she flirting with you?" it becomes, "Who was that girl and does she work for the shadow government, with plans of exploiting your resources thorough taxation, until they are depleted enough to constitute martial law?"

I suspect that if you meet someone on Kwink.com, "Netflix and chill" becomes

"documentary about the collapse of the financial system and panic." But, hey, go ahead and share some dehydrated food capsules over a nice ration of filtered, alkaline water, with the one you love but don't fucking trust as far as you can throw them. You can find that special someone to sleep with one eye open, at Kwink.com.

DiaperMates.com

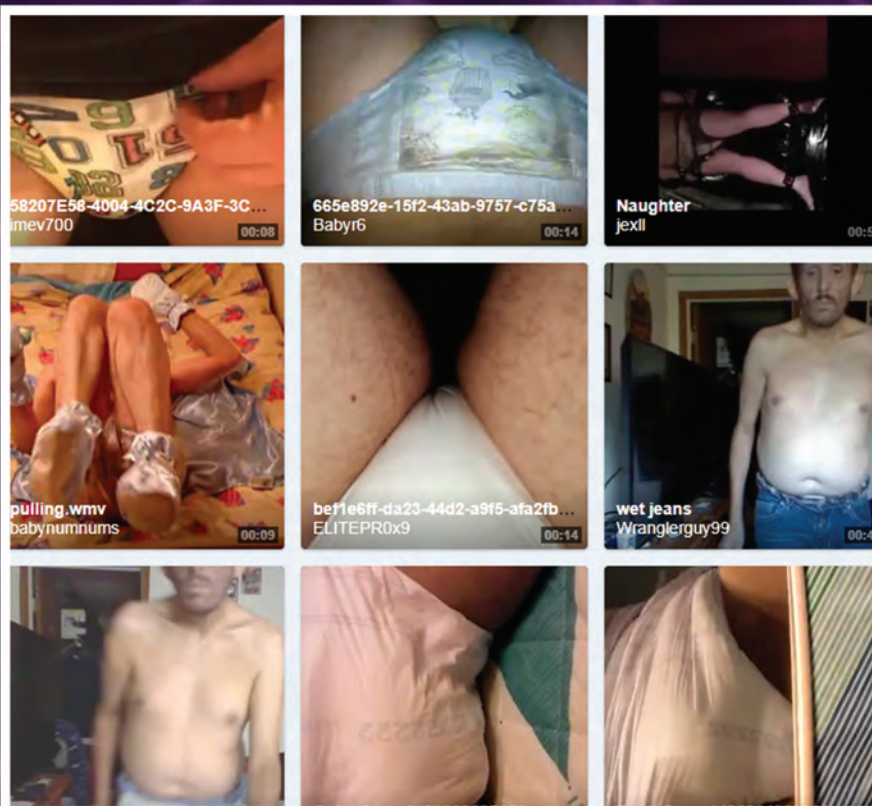
"Do not upload photos of kids, poop or nude pics"

Do we really need to say that? I mean, isn't it sort of a given? I guess not. Only Rule 34 is real—if it exists, there is porn of it. And, diapers are no exception. I've always

in terms of presentation.

If you're gonna represent a sexual fetish that is, arguably, already stigmatized enough (this isn't exactly foot licking or spankings we're talking about), please try to make your site look like it wasn't designed by the same folks who design church newsletters or white supremacy blogs. Even the ads on the site (which, by the way, are for diapers) contain colorful, child-like patterns that fit somewhere between Chuck E. Cheese and evidence obtained from a child porn ring. I mean, it's 2018, guys. Where can reasonable, well-adjusted, mature, diaper-wearing adults connect? Besides Tumblr? Step your game up, DiaperMates.com!

Well, that about wraps up my summary of where I'm spending Valentine's Day this year. One tip for the truly lonely out there, and trust me, this works—you know those "missed connection" ads on Craigslist? The ones like, "You were at Taco Bell throwing a fit about not getting sour cream on your burrito and I was the lonely dude in the tan coat, checking out your ass" and all that? Well, no one responds to missed connection ads, unless they fit the description. So, if you really want to meet a qualified lover, put something out that your potential crush would respond to. The ad I just posted says, "You were the blonde, deaf Brazilian in line at GameStop to pre-order *God Of War* for the PS4. I would have said hi, but I was busy counting my money." Anyone who replies will have a bargin' ass and an appreciation for Kratos. Or, you can just stick to ugly, incarcerated clowns in diapers.



giggled at the term "adult diapers" for various reasons (mostly related to how old I was each time I've seen them on sale at the store). But, this website takes it to a whole new level. Not only does it appeal to adults who have a diaper fetish (which, I'm not gonna knock...kink is kink and I won't shame it), but the web design is straight out of 1996 and is far from subtle,



Sexual Healing

by Anna Suarez

I had a lover who told me that he was blessed by the way I made love to him. I create a house of love for my partners—glistening in a rose-colored ambience, smelling like orange blossom and gardenia. Partially a sacred whore and partially a worshipper of all my lovers, I enrapture them in romance. Even if it's only for one night.

The wailing softness of my Lana Del Rey playlist opens my vulva like a peony. I can almost cum, just giving head, while feeling their comfort in my space. I call these spaces “the feminine spaces”—shelter, in a culture entrenched in toxic masculinity. A steady silence in between fucking under fluorescent light, with absolutely no music. Eros my holy ghost, I live by *Divine Pillars Of Sexual Healing*.

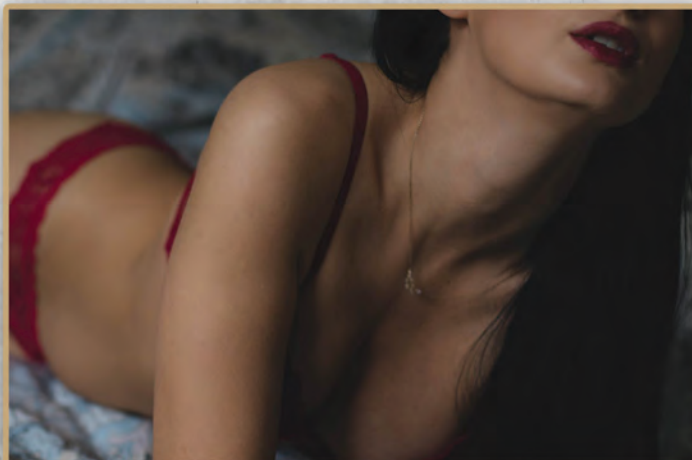
Lazy lovers are defeated by time. Their caresses do not linger. Eroticism is an act of devotion and decadence. Time must be invested carefully, for passion to linger and for the sweetness to enter dreams, after falling asleep. Edging has become the cherry on top of my sexual experience with my partner.

I run my hands around his cock, then gently invite him into my mouth with careful delicacy. As I feel his orgasm approaching, I stop for kisses and shy caresses. He begs for my touch, for my mouth, for the unity of honey and tree sap. *Wait a little longer. I want you to beg for me.* Maybe, I will wait until the daffodils rise again from the Earth, but never stop giving my love. When we cum together, the spaces between pleasures brings our orgasm into one turbulent wave.

Moonlight peeking through my curtains, I erect the space for our house of love. The

ocean inside of us is rustling, impatient for the pleasure, but each cornerstone around us must inspire passion. I align the windows with tea candles, dim the lights—except the rosy light bulbs underneath a sheer fabric—and light the incense.

I listen to music, as I dress in silk, lace or velvet. Lingerie is my costume for my rituals and the first tone I set, before I am unraveled. He decorates his limbs with my rose quartz and amethyst, sending Aphrodite's vibrations through his limbs. The mixture of musky skin, flowers and incense disintegrates all unpleasanties from my mind. There is only you, the moonlight...the flowers. *Nothing else. No one else.*



I am mesmerized by the semiotics of the mouth, how symbols of love are illustrated with heavy breaths. I anticipate the words exclaiming the insatiable desire. Erotic language is more than dirty talking—it is the way we celebrate our partner's interactions with our bodies. It is a beautiful way to establish consent romantically. *What will you do to me? How do you want to experience me?*

I once would shy away from speaking erot-

ically, afraid of the intimacy in those moments. Afraid to give too much simultaneously—my body and my mind. Sex means nothing to me, without the stimulation of the mind or the passion of the soul. I do not shy from words any longer. I do not shy away from emotion—from honesty—with my partner's body entangled with my mind, I'll whisper “*nothing else, no one else.*”

When the moon ceases her strong pulls of the tides and we whirl into climax, naked in the low tide, I run my hands across you. The climax has not ended—we are surrendering to the weight of love. We are indulging in how our bodies wind and unwind. I rise from the sea and tiptoe in the bathroom, as he is watching me. Smiling from the toilet and stretching my hands all the way to the bed, I feel enchanted by the delicious elixir making droplets in the toilet water.

He invites me into bed again with his arms. The climax is still moving, the love sets our souls ablaze and we lie under the stars. In this space, we share our most pleasurable moments. We rejoice. Time moves slowly, as I rest in the softness of our afterglow. He makes shapes on the contours of my back, as I sigh from the bliss of intimacy. Turning around to face him, running my fingers around his coarse beard, I see specks of light in his eyes that I miss in everyday life.

Sexual healing has the ability to connect souls collapsed by pain, silence and resentment. Looking into the eyes of the man I love, orgasm never ceasing, I whisper...

Nothing else. No one else.

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